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CLASSIC METAL vs. **NEW SCHOOL**

Wow! I'm blown away by the number of new metal faces that confront me when I open up your magazine every month. Let's see... Lacuna Coil, Mastodon, Bullet For My Valentine, Avenged Sevenfold. And that's just the beginning. Who said metal was dying? To my eyes and ears it looks like a new Golden Age is under way. Brad Macomb, IL

last five years, but now I'm beginning to get into Killswitch Engage, A7X and Atreyu thanks to the articles I've read in your magazine. There is a freshness to this music that I haven't heard in a long time, and rather than bemoaning their fate (which seems to be the desire of every band since Nirvana), these groups seem more interested in celebrating life. Good for them. Roof

Burlington, VT

So-called "new school" metal sucks!

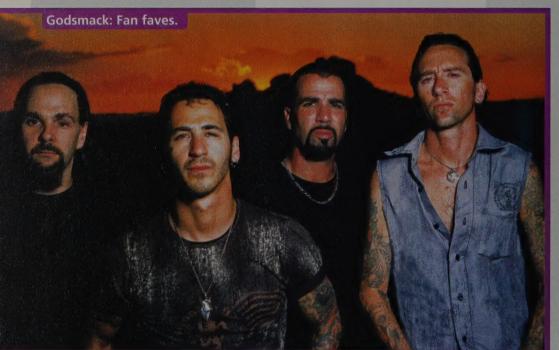
I've been there for every one. I must admit, that when they first announced this year's lineup, featuring System of a Down and Disturbed, with the occasional appearance by Ozzy, I was somewhat disappointed. I didn't see how it could possibly match up to some of the Fest's recent incarnations. But you know what? I think Ozzfest 2006 may have been the best event I ever attended. The bands were all really into it (including those that appeared on the Second Stage) and the fans were really into it, as well. Mike

Boston, MA

What are Sharon and Ozzv Osbourne thinking? Did they really believe that this year's lineup-featuring SOAD and Disturbed - could hold a candle to what's gone down over the last few years? Just go back to 2004 when Ozzfest presented Black Sabbath, Judas Priest and Slayer. Now that's heavy metal! This year it seemed like a lot of the energy had gone out of the show... and I was actually at one of the shows where Ozzy appeared! Fran Staten Island, NY

I went to both Ozzfest and The Unholv Alliance tours this summer. And I enjoyed them both. What they made me realize is that heavy metal is in good hands with young bands like Lamb of God and Avenged

Sevenfold. There's been a changing of the metal guard in recent years, and while it may



One of the things I've noticed about Hit Parader in recent months is that you guys seem to be a little slow to embrace the new generation of metal bands. While you've begun to focus your attentions on the likes of Atreyu, Bleeding Through and Avenged Sevenfold, each issue seems to also feature the requisite number of "classic" bandswhether they be Black Sabbath. Velvet Revolver or even Disturbed. I think it's time for HP to turn the corner and realize that a new generation of metal has begun to take over.

Ken St. Louis, MO

Thank you for introducing me to so many amazing new bands. I've been a big fan of Godsmack, Staind and the Deftones over the

Okay... there, I said it. What are you gonna do about it? To my way of thinking, today's metal is mostly just a bunch of whining, sniveling kids who want to drown their middle class "sorrows' with loud music. Today's metal has nothing at all to do with the great metal of the past. It has totally forgotten its blues roots and has become a way for a bunch of pimple-faced suburban white kids who couldn't get laid on their best day, to take out their frustrations.

Las Cruces, NM

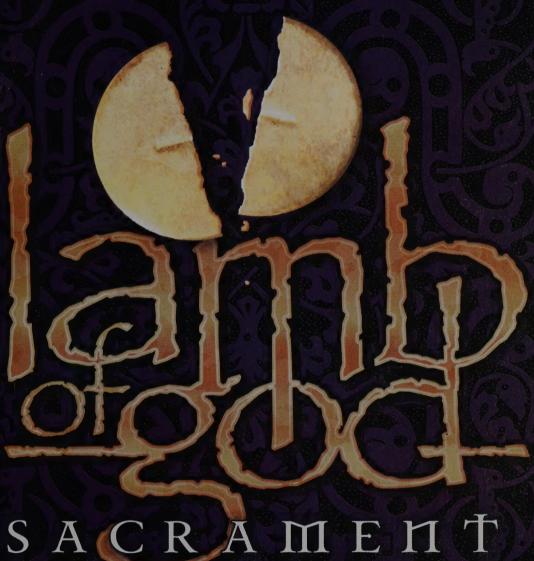
OZZFEST CONTROVERSY

I've attended most of the Ozzfests that have taken place. I think I missed two or three of them in the late '90s for whatever reason, but other than that,



6 HIT PARADER

BEHOLD... THE RESURRECTION



AUGUST 22





WE READ YOUR MAIL

take some of the new groups a little time to build up the kind of musical cachet held by a legion of earlier hard rock superstars, I think they'll manage to do it. Allie Portland, OR

Ozzfest rules! This year was my first experience there, and it was one of the best days of my life. I got there early to see all the Second Stage bands, and I thought they were all incredible. But when the Main Stage action started, everything went to an entirely new level. The energy and excitement was

mind-boggling. Chris Dallas, TX

TOOL TIME

I'm convinced that Tool is the most brilliant band currently in the hard rock world. Who else could take four years off between albums, yet return more focused, more dynamic, and more popular than ever before? They are so different than



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Atreyu: Leading the way.

anyone else because they're so comfortable exposing the more unpleasant sides of life. Some bands try to do that, but they end up merely exposing themselves as poseurs. With Tool, it's the real thing, 10,000 Days is the most brilliant album of the year... of this decade... of this century. Brad Hollywood, FL

Maynard James Keenan may be stretching himself a little too thin. I loved his first album with A Perfect Circle, and only liked their second one. Additionally, I loved Tool's last album, Lateralus, and I only like their new one, 10,000 Days. I appreciate the ambition that Tool brings to their music, but I must believe that if Maynard remained more focused on Tool alone, that band would greatly benefit from his increased attentions.

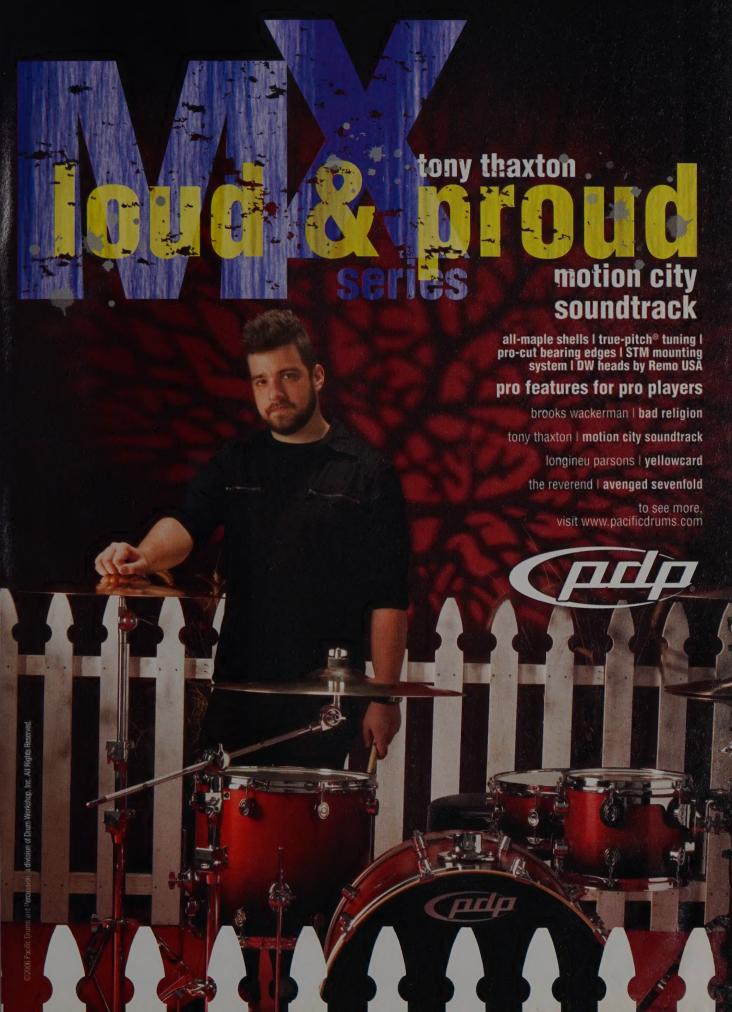
O.K. Tulsa, OK

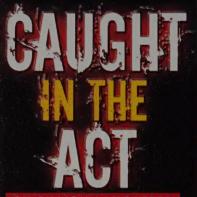
I have an early candidate for Album Of The Year... Godsmack's IV. I've loved Sully and his boys from Day One. But on this album they've made the Big Step that they've been missing. No longer are they just a snarling hard rock band. That element is still there, but now they've expanded their artistic scope to the point where they can tackle just about anything and pull it off with style.

So is Velvet Revolver still together? One day I read that they're in the studio making their second album, the next I hear that Slash and Duff may be leaving to reform Guns N' Roses with Axl. I certainly hope that VR stays together. I think they have more potential than any other band out there. I'm pretty sure they're okay and hard at work, but if they're reading this, I want them to know that I can't wait to hear their next album.

Dan Ft. Madison, IA

Toronto, Canada





DEFTONES

Chino Moreno was getting a little frustrated. He was doing his best to find a little peace and quiet, and the goateed frontman was finding his quest to be morethan-difficult. It was still two hours before Moreno's band, the Deftones, were scheduled to headline the Taste of Chaos concert stage, and the burly vocalist was just trying to enjoy his last few moments of solitude. As he scoured the crowded backstage area, hoping to find a corner in which he could secretly sequester himself- if only for a few precious minutes-his frustrations began to mount. Seemingly every which-way he turned, Moreno found himself encountering friends, family and fans, all of whom wanted to wish him the best in regard to both that day's performance and the impending release of the band's latest album-one during which this decade old alterna-metal unit almost met their untimely demise. Despite it all, however, the look of resolve rarely left his weary face. He knew that such adulation just comes with the territory when you just-

Moreno returned to the Deftones dressing room, where he quickly and casually greeted his band-mates; guitarist Stephen Carpenter, bassist Chi Cheng, drummer Abe Cunningham and d.i. Frank Delgado. Rather than being strained after their difficult studio ordeal, the band's camaraderie was infectious, a reflection of the warm embrace the rock world has provided to the Deftones on their latest tour. While some long-time fans have put forth the notion that the material fea-

tured on the new collection (some of which was presented during the band's Chaos dates) lacks the overwhelming sonic bite featured on the band's earlier discs.

Adrenaline, Around The Fur and White Pony, others believe the latest musical offering from this Californiabased unit will serve as their magnum opus. For his part, Moreno certainly hopes that latter scenario proves

people feel that we've gotten a little too melodic at places on this album," the singer said. "But apparently they're not listening to this music the same way I am. I think we're trying to play great musicand I'm trying to sing rather than just yell all the time. It was never done with the purpose more on the newer stuff. Perhaps Carpenter's heavy-handed guitar runs were the slightest bit more accessible. But most in attendance couldn't have cared less. They were there to rock with the Deftones, and the group pulled out all the stops in their attempts to provide their loyal fan base with exactly what they

'The response the fans have given us on

Chino Moreno: Expanding his vocal skills.



"The response the fans have given us on the Taste of Chaos tour has been very rewarding.

"We went through hell making this album," Moreno said as he continued wandering through the cavernous backstage area. "But in the end, it turned out incredibly well. We fought with the record label, our original producer and with each other, but after three years of incredible struggle we ended up with something that represents the very best of what we

After finally giving up on his hope of finding a pre-show Fortress of Solitude, that's what happens we can live with it.

and new-was stoked to-the-brim as they waited for the Deftones to take the stage. As soon as the band appeared under the spotlight, the crowd was on its feet, a position they wouldn't change (expect to occasionally mosh in front of the stage) for the next 90 minutes. Mixing old favorites like *My Own Summer* (Shove It), with new selections drawn from their latest release, the dichotomy between the blurred. Perhaps Moreno did "sing" a little bit

the Taste of Chaos tour has been very rewarding," Moreno said as he cooled off in the band's post-concert dressing room. "Just being able to tour with bands like My Chemical Romance, The Used and Killswitch Engage is great for us because it expands our audience. People who may have never heard us before now know who we are and what we do. To hear the fans respond like they did today to so many of the new songs just reaffirms our belief that we did the right thing with this album and this tour.'

10 HIT PARADER

COME WHAT(EVER) MAY



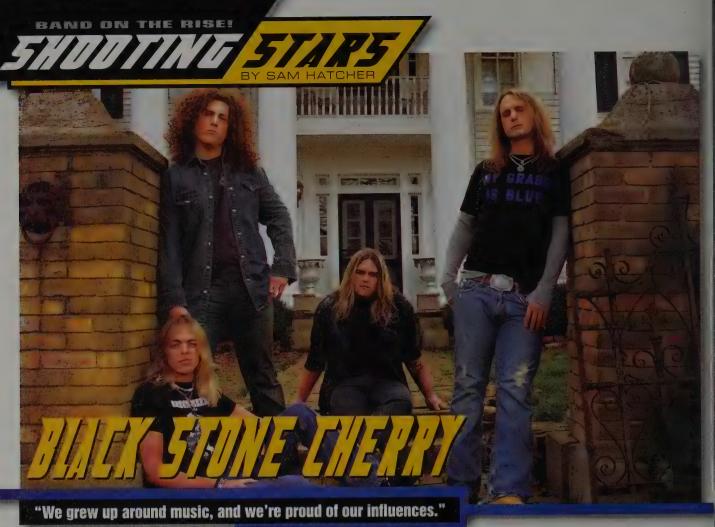
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Something rather strange is going on in the hard rock world. After a period earlier this decade when it seemed as if the form was in danger of reaching an evolutionary dead end, a legion of young bands have recently emerged, each and every one of whom seem determined to return to the form's roots in order to find their primary source of motivation.

Major label acts such as Wolfmother, Lamb of God, Priestess, Mastodon and Mercy Fall have all attempted to rekindle the long-dormant spark of decades-old metal philosophies in order to inspire their own 21st Century creative efforts. Indeed, rather than citing such au-courant faves

as Nine Inch Nails, Slipknot or Nirvana as their principle sources of power-packed inspiration, these bands seem

to rally behind the primal efforts of groups ranging from Mountain and Maiden to Led Zeppelin and AC/DC. Now we can add the Kentucky-based foursome Black Stone Cherry into this somewhat surprising musical mix. As shown throughout their self-titled debut album, vocalist/guitarist Chris Robertson, guitarist Ben Wells, bassist Jon Lawhorn and drummer John Fred Young have taken the path pioneered by some of hard rock's founding fathers and added their own, highly original twist to the musical mix.

"We're all from a small town (Edmonton, Kentucky) where there isn't much else to do except listen to music and then go play music,"
Robertson said, "We're kind of in a vacuum— it's
a 'dry county' where you can't even get alcohol—
so you've got to find ways to entertain yourself...
without getting into too much trouble. We all share
a love for great rock and roll, and when you throw
in the diverse musical styles that fill the area we
live in— everything from blues to rock and bluegrass— you begin to understand why we've
developed the kind of style we have."

Another major factor that has influenced the musical direction pursued by Black Stone Cherry is the fact that these guys have known each other since they were kids. And despite the fact that Robertson said. "People are gonna give you a quick and honest reaction. Everyone takes their music very seriously down here. If they hate you, you'd better be ready to run for your lives. But if they like you, they'll embrace you like you were some long-lost kin. We've been very lucky that way—people got behind us right away and they've never taken a step back."

Upon listening to **Black Stone Cherry** it's easy to understand why this quartet has won-over such a loyal following. From the power-packed chords that herald *Backwoods Gold* to the mystical elements that fuel *Lonely Train*, it's immediately apparent that this is one band that's

"Blending classic rock influences into a sound for the 21st Century."

they're all still in their early 20s, they share a common history that fills their sound with a like-minded purpose. Formed back in June, 2001, the band immediately went to work writing their own material and jamming in an old house that had been used by area bands for that express purpose since the late '60s. Slowly, but surely, BSC's repertoire began to grow— as did their self-confidence. As they began to perform in the area' rough-'n-ready clubs, the uniformly positive response they received began to convince them that this band of theirs might just end up being more than some sort of time-killing "hobby."

"When you play in clubs down in our neck of the woods, you're guaranteed one thing," learned all of their rock and roll lessons very well. But just when you think you might have BSC pegged as a "clone" of this group, or a "copy-cat" of that one, they throw you a series of musical curves on songs like *Rain Wizard* and *Rollin' On* that convince you that this is truly a band all their own.

"We don't mind people comparing us to some of the rock of yesteryear," Robertson said. "That's kind of hard to avoid, "But we're most happy when after making that association, they take the time to see where we've taken some of those influences."

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place that the exciting young heavy metal band Mercy Fall call home.

When you hail from a place like Flagstaff, you know from Day One that you're gonna have to fight for every inch you gain up the rock and roll ladder of success. But away from the harsh glare of the media spotlight a band can develop at their own speed, with their own influences and tastes, without fighting countless other faceless groups in order to be hipper-than-thou, or the chosen flavor-of-theday. That's just the way it's been for vocalist Nate Stone, guitarist Jeff Lusby, bassist Kieran Smiley and drummer Ethan Rea. From the time they first got together back in 2001, they've been able to forge ahead on their own terms, all of which has now led to the release of Mercy Fall's powerful-yet-introspective major label debut, For The Taken

"We've been very lucky as a band because we've been able to always follow our hearts," Stone said. "A lot of what we're hearing out there at the moment are bands that are just trying to make noise in order to get themselves noticed. To our ears, so much of today's rock leaves you wondering what those bands and those songs are really about. Our goal is to bring back the concept that music can really say something important, and do it in a very powerful way."

The members of Mercy Fall have come to their unique hard rock perspectives through years of trial-and-error efforts to perfect their guitar-driven sound. Growing up under the pervasive influences of '90s-era grunge (especially units like Soundgarden and Pearl Jam) convinced these ambitious rockers that a band didn't need to sacri-

fice their lyrical edge in order to play heavy music. With their tastes also including everything from vintage blues to avant-garde jazz—with a little hardcore thrown in for good measure—it's not surprising that when this unit started to construct their own songs in 2002, they were often amazed by the diversity featured within each and every one of them.

"We've always been fascinated by the ethereal feel and mysticism and creative chaos that's behind both art and music," Smiley said. "That has always tended to color what we do. When you throw in our very schizophrenic musical tastes, you begin to understand why we're a very different kind of band. But it's true that out biggest shared influence was probably grunge. Underneath all that distortion and darkness were a lot of really beautiful melodies. They managed to get beyond just the explosive sonics, and that's what we want our songs to do foo."

clearly, throughout For The Taken, Mercy Fall has cleverly managed to avoid modern rock cliches while producing songs that are both highly listenable and overtly powerful. On such tracks as Insurmountable, Not Broken Down and Fade, this quartet have turned the conventional rock and roll "rule book" inside out, in the process creating one of the year's most continually challenging hard rock showcases. While at times it sounds as if this unit is trying just a bit too hard to be "different", the net results of their efforts mark Mercy Fall as a band destined to make an impact on the hard rock scene of 2006... and beyond.

"There is a depth to these songs that we don't believe you're hearing very often these days," Stone said. "But what makes us proud is that as strong as we feel this album is, when we go on stage and play 'em live, they become even more powerful. And so far, where ever we've been able to play, the fans seem to share our passion. We want to carry them to a higher plateau through his music."



















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BY WINSTON CUMMINGS

If you're one of the fortunate few who's been living on an uncharted South Pacific isle for the last few years, totally cut off from wi-fi, hi-fi, my-fi, text messaging, the internet, or MTV, you probably don't know that Bleeding Through are the latest "darlings" of the metal underground. You're probably unaware of how on their latest

album. The Truth, this Orange County, CA sextet have managed to meld their dark, depressing, pain-laced metal-core sound with elements of more "traditional" metalincluding actual melodies- to emerge with a disc filled with songs like Dearly Demented and Kill to Believe that have rocked the heavy music world to it's very soul. Well, if you have somehow remained blissfully unaware of Bleeding Through until now, please consider vourself properly informed!

For their part, vocalist Brandan Schieppati, kevboardist Marta Peterson. guitarist Scott Danough, drummer Derek "Deebo Dude" Youngsma, gui-tarist Brian Leppke and bassist Ryan Wombacher have heard all the talk of how they're leading the charge of a "new metal generation." While they're honored by such a notion, in truth this like-minded unit would probably prefer to go about their musical business in relative anonymity, hopingagainst-hope that the media (which is solely

responsible for casting them in the role of underground metal's Pied Pipers of 2006) would back off just a bit and allow Bleeding Through to continue to grow in relative peace.

We're just trying to become the best band we possibly can be." Schieppati said. "A lot of different elements have come together for us on The Truth which have allowed us to really take a major step ahead. What we tried to do was make an album that didn't take off in different directions; we wanted it to be more straight-to-the-point. It's also a lot faster and more pissed off, but at the same time we've made sure that whatever we had made melodic before is even more melodic now. At the same

"We're just trying to become the best band we possibly can be."



time, whatever was heavy is now twice as

heavy and twice as brutal."
It's taken the members of Bleeding Through five sometimes challenging years to reach their current position as Overnight Sensations in the hard rock world. In fact, back when their debut disc, Dust to Ashes, was released in 2001, it seemed as if this

unit's emotive blend of emo, hardcore and metal reactants would run the risk of falling on deaf ears. After all, back then the hard rock kingdom was far more attuned to mainstream acts like Disturbed and Godsmack than to anything as subversively "radical" as Bleeding Through.

By the time their fol-

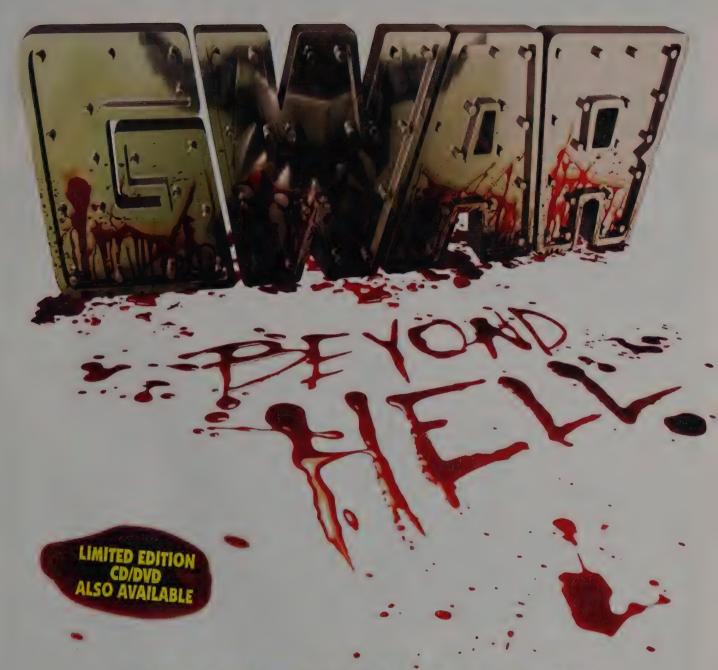
low-up, Portrait of a

Goddess, emerged a vear later, it appeared as if the band's dark metal-core roots were beginning to show more prominently... but still, only a few "coverts" seemed to care. But with a change of labels in 2003, and the emergence of their next album, This is Love, This is Murderous, it seemed as if things were beginning to change for this unit- a fact given further credence by their greatly increased coverage by both the world's print media, and by MTV2, where a pair of their videos (On Wings of Lead and Love Lost

in a Hail of Gunfire)

became rotation staples. That success led directly to the band being invited to join such diverse tours as the 2004 Ozzfest and MTV2's Headbanger's Ball Tour— each of which radically amped up the band's recognition factor. Now, with the immediate focus being placed on The Truth, Bleeding Through seems perfectly placed to lead metal's next charge to the top... whether they like it or not!

What makes us the most proud is that when we listen to the other bands out there, we don't hear anything else even remotely similar to what we're doing," Schieppati said. "But we're not really trying to be different— we're just trying to be true to what we believe in.



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ach month we like to put two of our top Hit Parader staffers in a room with a stack of new releases. Sometimes they agree on the quality of these recent arrivals— more often, they don't. Either way, we call this exercise in musical futility Collision Course.

Call them what you want— Stoner Rock, Heavy Metal, Acid Rock, Retro-Metal—the fact is that as shown throughout their self-titled debut disc. Wolfmother are one heck of a band. Sure, their fuzztoned, heavily-droned, and often stoned songs take us back on a heady trip to hard rock's formative years. But rather than sounding pointedly dated, these Australian power rockers come across like they actually invented this stuff! For those who are ancient enough to actually remember the first budding of this Flower Power sound, this regressive rock outing ranks as nothing less than

sweet nostalgia. For those of today's generation, it's a journey back to the formative roots of the heavy rock movement— and an entertaining sojourn it is. RATING:

Okay, I knew that hard rock had wandered a little too far out on a limb over the last few years with its attempts to incorporate such au-courant sounds a hip-hop and reggae into the musical mix. But as the form naturally imploded back onto itself, who could have

imagined that a stone-age band like Wolfmother, who in look, sound and style appear to have emerged out of a time capsule sealed back in 1973, would emerge as one of the new leaders of the heavy music form. I may have trouble on a number of levels with this style of music becoming so popular in 2006, but my gut instinct tells me to just sit back and enjoy it.

There's something going on in the hard rock world that's a little difficult to comprehend. It seems as if an entire generation of young bands (think Wolfmother, Priestess, Bullet For My Valentine) have turned their back on the sounds and styles of the 21st Century and harkened back all the way to the rockin-and-rollin' 1970s for the primary source of musical inspiration. Certainly add Black Stone Cherry to that list, for on their self-titled debut, these Southern-friend rockers mix everything



BHIT PARADER

from early AC/DC and Sabbath riffs to vintage Skynyrd attitude to create a package brimming over with power, energy and a surprising degree of blue-eyed soul.

I assumed I was going to HATE everything about Black Stone Cherry: the long haired jeans-'n-denim look, the guitar solos in every song approach, the "time tested" musical attitudes. But what I didn't expect to find were four really young dudes who've learned all of their rock and roll lessons



e Madiles

Define The Great Line

(Tooth And Nail)

The outwardly Christian unit Underoath came out of nowhere with their last album, We Are Only Chasing Safety, which went on to sell over a quarter of a million copies. Thanks to the band's emotional earnestness and post-hardcore energy, Underoath connected with the kids. They further strengthen that connection on their highly anticipated follow-up, Define The Great Line. Here. Underoath's fangs are sharper, while their hearton-the-sleeve lyrics are brighter and more beautiful. *In Regards To Myself* is a classic, get-it-out-ofthe-way opener, one that comes in, kicks your ass with its tempo and dynamic shifts, and ends with a squall of feedback. The song sets the tone for the rest of Define The Great Line. A Moment Suspended In Time and You're Ever So Inviting are intense yet inviting. It is on songs like these that Underoath walk the tightrope between edgy and tense, and they walk it without a net. STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Every Time I Die, Killswitch Engage, Thursday

The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here

Much has been made about the fact that Steve Albini (who lists powerhouse bands like Nirvana and Chevelle on his resume) produced Zao's new album. Albini is a noisenik, and therefore, he fits Zao's style to a tee. This Western Pennsylvania band, who have broken up more times than we can keep count of, have put together their most focused and cohesive effort to date with The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here. The album is nasti-

er than a starving, rabid, drooling Rottweiler. Singer Dan Weyandt is a Christian, but he sounds like his soul has been possessed by a pack of heretical demons who've come straight from the bowels of hell on The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here. Weyandt spits up phlegmatic vocals and that is the most distinct sonic feature on the record, followed by the knotted, deathy riffs. If you labored under the illusion that Christians can't rock to the utmost extreme, then Zao will certainly dispel any doubts on The Fear Is What Keeps Us Here. We deem this a career-defining release. STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Converge, Living Sacrifice. Darkest Hour

EBEL MEETS REBEL **Rebel Meets Rebel**

Rebel Meets Rebel are the Cowboys From Hell, sans Philip Anselmo. The core of Pantera -guitarist

Dimebag Darrell, bassist Rex Brown, and drummer Vinnie Paul- reunited and recruited renegade country vocalist David Allen Coe to sing for this redneck rock project, before Dime's untimely death. Thankfully, Dime's legacy lives long and loud on Rebel Meets Rebel. His signature, grooved out riffs are apparent on Nothin' To Lose, the title track, and Heart Worn Highway. While diehard Pantera fans with no prior experience with country music will need more than a few listens in order to fully digest, appreciate, and comprehend Rebel Meets Rebel, the rebellious nature of this release will undoubtedly satisfy headbangers for vears to come. STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Pantera, Confederate flags, red-

Artimus Pyledriver (DRT)

Did we miss something? Did late AC/DC throat Bon Scott come back from the dead and form a dirty. Southern rawk band specializing in bluesy. masculine riffs that'll put hair on your chest? It sure sounds like Scott has been resurrected on Artimus Pyledriver's self-titled debut. You need go only a few vocal notes into leadoff track Swamp Devil, and you'll swear that you're listening to Bon

Scott. But it's really Dave Slocum, AP's frontman, channeling the voice of legend through his pipes. Artimus Pyledriver is loud and leaden; it's rock 'n roll with a punk rock soul and it's a riff fest. This is the kind of debut record that makes the often jaded and cynical editors of Hit Parader stand up. take notice, and have re-affirmed faith in the redemptive powers of rock 'n roll.

We'd like to thank Artimus Pyledriver for inviting us to their rawk 'n roll tent revival! STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Clutch, Nashville Pussy Motorhead, AC/DC

YOUR GOALS Mutiny

We at Hit Parader are reminded of the Civ record of the same name every time we come in contact with Set Your Goals. Civ's Set Your Goals record was full of ultra-melodic, catchy hardcore gems, and Mutiny, the debut full length from Set Your Goals the band, is like-minded. Mutiny is full of shimmery, melodic hardcore songs that are polished and buffed to a sheen; you can hear every lyric, every fill, every singalong, and every one of the three chords that Set Your Goals like to play with, in high definition. You'll either love or hate the higher-pitched, somewhat effeminate vocals,



The Indies

but you'll definitely love the effervescent, bouncy quality that permeates all of **Mutiny**. If you don't have fun when listening to this album, then you have no soul! Set Your Goals defy you to *not* sing along with most of the tunes on **Mutiny**. **STARS**: ***

FOR FANS OF: Fugazi, Comeback Kid, Terror

THE AUTUMN OFFERING Embrace The Gutter (Victory)

Florida's The Autumn Offering have graduated from Stillborn Records, the label owned and operated by Hatebreed's Jamey Jasta to the greener pastures of Victory Records, one of metal's most successful independent labels. They've also upped the metal ante on **Embrace The Gutter**, an album that spews venom from start to finish. Decay and Embrace The Gutter are bitter and bilesoaked, so much so that you'll

wonder what the hell The Autumn Offering are so pissed about. It doesn't matter, though. The band fires off sludge-caked riffs and solos, and that's what makes **Embrace The Gutter** a worth-while listen. And we're all allowed our share of bad days, aren't we? The Autumn Offering appear to have a lot of bad days, and they're taking it out on their instruments. More power to 'em.

STARS: ***

FOR FANS OF: Lamb Of God, Pantera

RAGE

Speak Of The Dead (Nuclear Blast)

Rage's **Speak Of The Dead** is their – get this- seventeenth album! That's not a typo, fair readers. So, when we call this German band an institution, we mean it. Most bands don't get around to making a seventh album, much less a seventeenth.

Therefore, Rage gets our utmost respect. Speak Of The Dead kicks off with two instrumental tracks, and the vocal-less cuts have a victorious, glorious, prog-meets-power metal cast. It's almost as though these tracks, titled *Mortituri Of The Salutant* and *Prelude Of Souls*, could have served as the score for any of the movies in the *Lord Of The Rings* trilogy. Even when the vocals kick in on a track like *Innocent*, Rage's music still sounds like a movie score. There's an epic, building quality in each song that is ripe for action-packed sequences in a mystical movie. While the audience for such music is limited, Speak Of The Dead is well-conducted and reserved for a special set of metalheads.

FOR FANS OF: Tolkien, score metal, career bands

JOAN JETT AND THE BLACKHEARTS Sinner (Blackheart)

You gotta hand it to Joan Jett. She's been slinging her guitar (and she plays like she learned how to strum in the womb) since she was a teenager in The Runaways and she still manages to put out quality, rowdy rockers well into her 40s. Miss Jett still looks fantastic, and she still plays with all the heart and passion of a hot-blooded youngster. Sure, Jett's I Love Rock And Roll days are in the rear-view, but she carries on. **Sinner** offers the hand-clap heavy Riddles and the spirited A,C,D,C, as well as riffy numbers like Naked and Androgynous, all of which are lead by Jett's gravelly, come hither, and commanding voice. Props to Joan for continuing to do what she's done for the past 25 years, without sacrificing any edge or integrity. Also of note is the fact that **Sinner** has over a dozen songs, yet none of them

feel like filler or B-sides that shouldn't have made the album.

STARS: ***

EMBRACE THE GUTTER

FOR FANS OF: The Runaways, L7, career artists

LYE BY MISTAKE Arrangements For Fulminating Vective (Lambgoat)

Forget the fact that we at Hit Parader needed a dictionary in order to decipher the meaning of the words in the album title - and we're writers, for cryin' out loud. Lye By Mistake are not only interesting because of their whacky, atypical time signatures and use of jazzy breakdowns. This St. Louis troupe are also interesting because Arrangements For Fulminating Vective is the inaugural release for Lambgoat Records, the new label formed by the fine folks who run the popular hardcore news website, www.lambgoat.com. The powers that be at Lambgoat Records picked this abnormal, extremely screamy band with computery effects, and we're betting that the band's brazen, complicated, outside-the-box style was the key reason for snatching up the band. But be forewarned: Lye By Mistake are an acquired taste for those with experimental palettes. STARS: *

FOR FANS OF: Dillinger Escape Plan, Horse The Band, Blood Brothers

KARMA CYCLE Outshined EP (Outshined Productions)

The members of Karma Cycle have studied dutifully at the modern, neo-metal academy also attended by current genre heavyweights like Mudvayne and Korn. **Outshined** is erected on bottom-heavy riffs, alternately sung and screamed vocals, and mid-tempo songs. The production is a little uneven, as the vocals blend into the mix a bit too much, but that probably comes from lack of experience. However, this Brooklyn band knows how to write a memorable melody. *Only Alibi* is this EP's stand out track. While this style has petered out over the past few years, if you like Korn, Nonpoint, and Mudvayne, then you'll dig

Karma Cycle. STARS: **

FOR FANS OF: Mudvayne, early Deftones, Korn, Disturbed



very well... and then done something interesting with them. This stuff rocks! And while we've all heard most of this before in one form or another, **Black Stone Cherry** once again proves the enduring legacy of great heavy music.

RATING: ***

SLAYER, CHRIST ILLUSION

The arrival of a new Slayer album always qualifies as BIG NEWS in heavy metal circles. After all, this West Coast Crunch Bunch hasn't exactly been the most prolific band on the planet over the last decade. In fact, their new album, Christ Illusion, represents their first sonic offering since 2001's God Hates Us All. And while we know the Slay-masters have been busy during that interval (appearing at Ozzfest back in '04, as well as recently headlining their own Unholy Alliance road trek), the half-decade between releases has seemed like an eternity in hell to their faithful followers. But, thank Satan himself, the looong wait has been worth the results presented here where such songs as Catalyst, Jihad and Eyes of the Insane rank with anything this legendary outfit has produced throughout their two-decade run through the pits of Hades. RATING:

Call me crazy— believe me, I've been called worse by better people than you! But for whatever reason I've never been a huge Slayer fan. Maybe it's because I've always believed their hell-bent approach to be rather one-dimensional, or perhaps it's because there was an inherent inflexibility to their sound that



always prevented them from evolving into a *truly* important band. But with all that said, I've got to admit a grudging admiration for **Christ Illusion**. Here Slayer once again prove that they do the Voodoo that they do better than anyone ever has... or most likely, ever will RATING: ***

CRADLE OF FILTH, THORNOGRAPHY

Cradle of Filth are one of those bands that so many State-side metal fans talk about... yet few have ever heard, and even fewer have ever seen perform. That's just the dichotomy that Dani Filth and his British troops have faced throughout their long and frequently distinguished career. But with the release of their latest disc, **Thornography**, the time may *finally* be right for COF to begin garnering significant air-play in addition to their ever-constant underground "buzz." As always, this is a dense, expansive, and at times blood-curdling metal showcase, the kind of music that should appeal to those who have graduated from Slipknot's brand of more primal Shock Rock. RATING: **

I've always had a bit of a soft spot for Cradle of Filth— a band whose name and appearance have served to turn off legions of potential followers even before they attempted to sample this Euro-metal beast's savory bits of classically-inspired flotsam. On their new release,

Thornography, these guys once again rock the Cradle with some of the most inventive musical twists in the hard rock kingdom. And while we can do without some of their more pretentious bits of their melodramatic flair, we sure appreciate the effort.

RATING: ***

EIGHTEEN VISIONS,

This So Cal unit has long been expected to deliver a BIG album— one that captured not only their free-wheeling hardcore spirit, but also the surprising degree of melody that has always characterized their work. Well, on their major label debut, **Eighteen Visions**, the 18V crew seems to have delivered on all fronts. Characterized by the haunting melodies and strident power that fills their break-out hit, *Tonightless*, throughout this effort vocalist James Hart and his boys utilize melody to offset their heavy-handed beats, creating a multi-faceted, and at times brilliant showcase for what hard rock can be in 2006.

There was a time when I thought Eighteen Visions could very well be the future of hard rock. But back on their 2004 album **Obsession**, when they started to turn from the more strident sounds that characterized their earlier discs to a more "mainstream" approach, I feared the direction they may be choosing. Now with the appearance of **Eighteen Visions**, many of my strongest fears have been realized. 18V have gone soft! Their latest disc is so melodic at times that I think I may be listening to gosh-darn Def Leppard. RATING: **



Quick Reviews At A Glance

SLIPKNOT, 9.0: LIVE RATING: ****

SYSTEM OF A DOWN, HYPNOTIZE RATING: ****

HIM, DARK LIGHT RATING: ***

ROLLING STONES, THE BIGGER BANG RATING: ****

SEVENDUST, NEXT RATING: ****

COLD,
A DIFFERENT
KIND
OF PAIN
RATING: ****

P.O.D., TESITIFY RATING: ***

TAPROOT, BLUE-SKY RESERARCH RATING: ****

STAIND, CHAPTER V RATING: ***

STATIC-X, START A WAR RATING: ****

SYSTEM OF A DOWN, HYPNOTIZE RATING: ****

NINE INCH NAILS, WITH TEETH RATING: *****

AUDIOSLAVE, OUT OF EXILE RATING: *****

MUDVAYNE, LOST AND FOUND RATING: ***















AVENGED SEVENFOLD: The members of Avenged Sevenfold realize that they've become the lightning rods of the current hard rock revival. Some people love this So Cal band with all their heart and soul.... others hate them with a similar passion. But the A7X seem to court such diverse sentiments through their emotionally-charged metal epics, and quitarist Zacv Vengeance seems to understand why his unit has created such a ruckus. "When you have influences as diverse as ours— everything from Bad Religion to Iron Maiden— you're almost guaranteed to piss some people off." he said. "We not only understand that, we appreciate it."

OZZY: Ozzy Osbourne admits to being "incredibly relieved" that he's completed work on his first solo album in four years. At first, the Ozz was concerned that he would not complete the effort in time to hit the road as part of this summer's Ozzfest (on which he's headlining 10 shows.) But thanks to the prodding of guitarist Zakk Wylde virtually the entire disc was completed in early June, just in time for Ozzy to focus on rehearsals for his live set. "I don't work that well under pressure," Ozzy said. "But we've managed to get a lot of work done- and it's something that I am very proud of. Working with Zakk made it all come together for me.

STONE SOUR: The success of Stone Sour's sophomore disc. Come What(ever) May. has once again made many within the rock community speculate about how such accolades will impact the future of Slipknot. With two of that band's members--- vocalist Corey Taylor and guitarist James Rootenmeshed within the Stone Sour regime. could there be a potential conflict? "I've

learned that there's room for both bands in my life," Taylor said. "I went through this before, and I learned my lessons from that."

GODSMACK: Sully Erna has fought against personal demons many times in his life, but he admits that prior to beginning work on Godsmack's latest effort, IV, he suffered through one of his worst periods, "The strange thing is that it's hard for me to explain exactly what was going wrong," he said. "Sometimes it seemed as if everything

was going against me. And just as I'd begin to pull myself out of it, something else would happen. Finally, I got up one day and just said, 'Let's deal with it... this too shall pass.' From then on I began to focus more on the music, and slowly everything's started to get better.'

SYSTEM OF A DOWN: System of a Down have now been on the tour trail for the last 18 months— ever since Mezmerize came out early in 2005. But with the completion of their headlining Ozzfest run, these platinumcovered West Coast alt-metal masters can finally see the end of the road... both literally and figuratively. "When you first begin a tour, you can't think about it lasting for a year or more," said vocalist Serj Tankian. 'You've got to take it in segments-otherwise it can overwhelm you. Now, as we look back, it's been an amazing experience over the last few years... probably the highlight of our professional lives.

DISTURBED: David Draiman has heard the talk about how this year's Ozzfest lineup, featuring Disturbed, System of a Down, and on occasion, Ozzy Osbourne, isn't as strong as recent Fest presentations— which over the last two years has featured such metal stalwarts as Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden and Slayer. "You know what?" he asked. "This really isn't a competition. I think this is a great lineup because it's about what's happening today. Our latest album went platinum. Both of System's did, as well. I think that says it all.

KORN: So what exactly promoted Korn to bring their Family Values tour concept out of mothballs after five years of inactivity? According to vocalist Jonathan Davis, it was



Disturbed:Ozzfest, not a competition.

just the band's belief that it was the perfect time to do it. "We looked around and saw a lot of festival-style tours going out, and really charging a lot," he said. "So we decided to try and give something back; we wanted to go out with a great tour package (featuring the Deftones and Stone Sour, among others) and have tickets available for as little as \$9.99. That way everyone should get the chance to come out and have some fun."

VELVET REVOLVER: The plot surrounding the recording of Velvet Revolver's second album continues to grow thicker by the minute. Back in the spring, rumors were running rampant that the band might be on the verge of breaking up, with guitarist Slash and bassist Duff thinking of rejoining their old bud, Axl Rose, for a Guns N' Roses reunion. When those stories quickly fell apart, media attention then centered upon Sash's personal life. Now, as the new disc nears completion, it appears as if this evertempestuous crew has righted their musical ship and is prepared to rock the world before 2006 draws to a close.

SLAYER: It's been widely speculated by the media that Slayer saw an apparent "weakness" in this year's Ozzfest lineup, and decided to take advantage of the situation by creating their own *Unholy Alliance* tour package. The members of the Crunch Bunch, however, beg to differ. They still apparently hold Ozzfest in the highest regard. "Being on that tour a few years ago was amazing," said guitarist Kerry King. "We learned a lot from that. But we didn't start The Unholy Alliance to try and do away with Ozzfest. All we wanted to do was make sure that fans had an alternative choice. There's nothing wrong with that."



BREAKING NEWS BY LOU O'NEILL, JR.

ON DEADLINE: IT SEEMS HARD to believe, it really does. Yet it's true. Eight long years have come and gone since Korn conceptualized, executed and changed rock forever with their unforgettable 1998 "Family Values Tour." Well...it's all coming down

And get this, Korn will ask only \$9.99 (you read that correctly) for fans to attend and enjoy music on the lawn. There are a few interesting groups out there right now at Korn's level, but this tour is certain to be

eclectic if nothing else. Joining Jonathan Davis and his mates will be Stone Sour and the Deftones as well as Flyleaf. And the sleepers on the 2006 "FVT" are a surprise band from Japan named Dir En Grey. Jonathan Davis describes these wildmen when he quips, "They are this crazy Japanese group that are just totally out of their minds!" Hmmm.

How these dudes can do this for \$9.99 is beyond the pale. And check out what Deftones Yapper Chino Moreno thinks about it. "Well," he told the men and women of the Fourth Estate, "We've had this crazy relationship with Korn so that we could be our own band.

Remember, their first record came out before ours, so it was always like, we were following in their footsteps. Now it's time to just have fun. We don't care about that stuff so much anymore. We just want to play with our friends.

COMMENT: Don't miss this one-day trip to the insane asylum, coming your way any moment.

SECRET STUFF: Tongues are wagging about the Brit metal star who hosted a wild party at a well known Beverly Hills landmark. Sure he threw a fantastic 12-hour blast for his posse. Only thing is that for every moment of the entire soiree, every record he ever made was foisted upon guests. It was so loud, it sounded like you were standing under the old Concorde,

QUICKIE QUIZ: Since our nation's full throttle into baseball this time of year, we came upon an oblique query that is bound to make you think. A few years back, Baseball rightfully permanently "retired" the number "42" to honor the late and great Jackie Robinson. Yet, today, even as you read these words, only one ballplayer is permitted to don "42". Name this superstar and his team. Correct ans. to last month's riddle: the four U.S. states that begin and end with the same letter are Alaska, Alabama, Arizona and Ohio.

ROCK WIRE REPORT: First off our chest, a hearty get-well wish to our old buddy Keith Richards of the Stones. Keith fell from a coconut tree in Fiji and ...yup—-you guessed it—landed right on his noggin! Ouch! No laughing matter either, as the rock legend had to undergo emergency surgery as doctors drilled his brain. Not fun! It was to relieve a clot, but thankfully, the doctors patched him up 100%. Keith, maybe it's time to go a little easier. You were fetching a coconut in a coconut tree? O.K....A Happy Birthday wish to Slash. The masterful quitarist turns 41 on July 23rd

Black Sabbath: Refusing to play at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

> Just as we predicted here months ago. Sabbath did show at the Waldorf Astoria in Gotham to be inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. But, as we also predicted, they refused to perform. Ozzy, Tony, Geezer and Bill left *Iron Man* for Metallica. And since we're on the soapbox, doesn't the Hall discredit itself when it inducts the likes of jazz legend, Miles Davis? It's the Rock 'n' Roll HOF. That simple.

> The kooky Tommy Lee told pals he feels like a blithering idiot! He was doing tequila shots with a beautiful lady in Toronto recently, only to freak out big-time when "she" became a "he." ... Courtney sold 25% of Kurt's publishing rights in a rather low-key way. Hush-hush. Snoops sniff she got more than 50 mil!

OVER 'N' OUT: By this time next month we'll have seen Axl and his new Guns in person. So, we'll have a full report next issue. Keep it simple, Axl, it's been a long. long time...The Queen of England would throw a whack-a-ding-hoy conniption fit if she only knew what one very young member of the Royal Family is doing on weekends. Please, we can say no more!!!...Starting like right now dept: every 18 seconds another American turns 60. Crunch those numbers!...Don't miss the Tool tour no matter what. Incredible!...Maybe it's just us, but if Flea and his Peppers haven't put out their finest yet, well, we'll eat our hat. **Stadium** Arcadium is 28 tunes of brilliance! Can you hear it? Prediction: The RHCP will have their biggest hit ever!

"We seem like we're a lightning rod for criticism.

Hit Parader: Does it feel strange to suddenly be considered one of the biggest bands in the world?

Zacy Vengeance: I guess it matters who's doing the "considering". If it's one of the fans who've been with us from the beginning, then I don't think there's anything cooler. But if it's someone who may have just discovered us with City of Evil, we ask them to go back, check out the earlier albums and get a good overview of this band. That way they'll understand where we are and where we've come from.

HP: It's sounds like you're almost a little resistant to fame.

ZV: No, not at all. But we've taken everything nice and slow in our career. We haven't pushed anything or let anything that's happened us take away from our focus. That's why we're trying not to let what's happening now get to us. We want to keep making the kind of music we've always made without feeling that we're selling out to fame- or increased media attention— in any way. We seem like we're a lightning rod for criticism like that. Some people feel that we're the new voice of hard rock... and others feel that we've had to sell out some of our basic beliefs to get where we are. Well, at least from my perspective that's not true.

HP: So what are Avenged Sevenfold's "basic

ZV: We're a band that combines a lot of different influences and styles into what we do. You can't just dismiss us as a metal band or a punk band or a goth band or a pop band. We're all that... and more. There's just as much Bad Religion in what we do as Pantera or Iron Maiden. That's what pisses some people off. They want to be able to label us and categorize us, and they can't do it. They fans love us because of that. But it's frustrated some people in the media. But that doesn't bother us.

HP: But there's a darkness to a lot of the band's material that continues to catch some people a little off-quard.

ZV: Yeah, there's definitely a darkness there—kind of a goth thing, to some extent. We've always had that in our music, but maybe it's become a little more prevalent on this album. It has nothing to do with how we feel as people or how successful we may become. That's a feeling that's deep inside all of us and it's probably never going to go

HP: Have you noticed much difference being on a major label as compared to being on indies as you were for the release of your earlier discs, Sounding the Seventh Trumpet and Waking the Fallen? ZV: You know where you notice a differ-

ence? When you're in the recording studio.

If you want to work with the best producer around, like Andy Wallace (who produced City of Evil), you can get him. You want to do something on the album that may be expensive? Now you can afford to do it. There's definitely a degree of freedom and confidence associated with being on a major that we never had before. But once we all get together and start making music, we still go

gives us a degree of credibility that we may have never had before, but I don't think we really worry about that one way or another... it's just a fact.

HP: We remember before the start of Ozzfest there was so much "mystery" surrounding your involvement. In fact, A7X wasn't even announced until a month after everyone else. Why

BY TED ABBOTT

back to the basic things that got us turned on to rock and roll in the first place.

Give us a little insight into the band's creative process. How does a song come

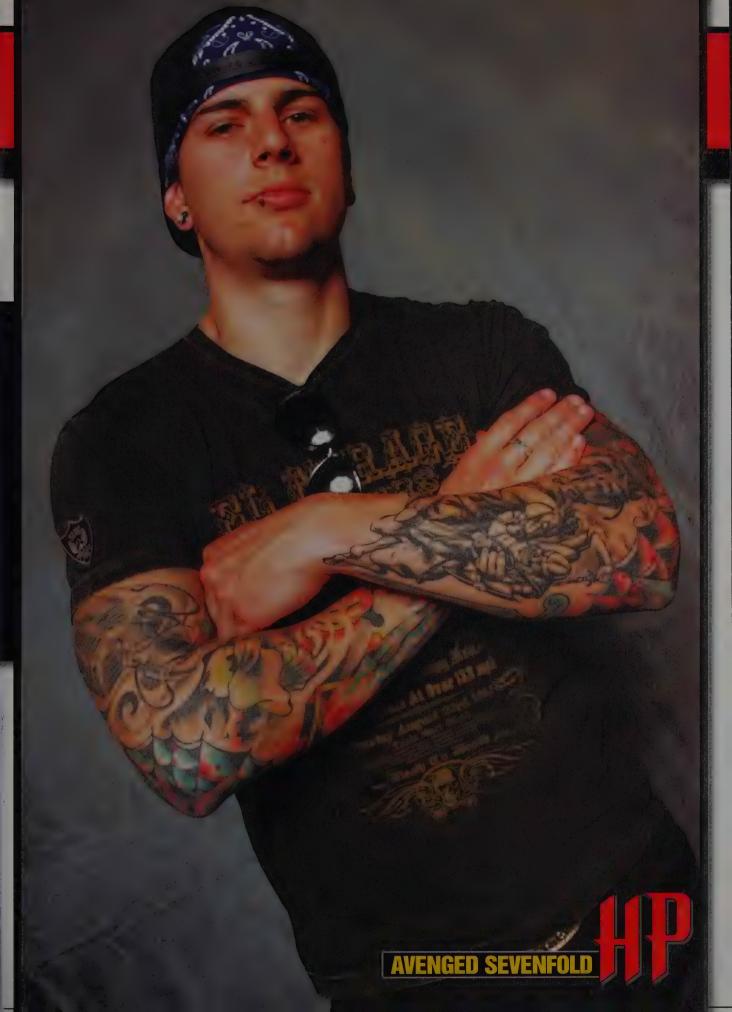
Okay, let's take Burn it Down. That might have been the first song we wrote for City of Evil. For that one, I came up with the basic guitar lick and immediately took it to M. Shadows. He heard it and started to add to it and expand the basic concept. Once we had a solid structure for the song, everyone else got involved and it came together kind of quickly. That's the way the good songs tend to be. When you start laboring over them they never seem to have the same kind of energy or passion as the ones that just seem to come together naturally.

You've been heavily involved with this summer's Ozzfest. How has that been going? It's been a lot of fun. We've had some

previous experience on big tours, so this is nothing new. But being a featured band on the Main Stage does take everything to the next level for us. I think being on this tour

ZV: Who knows? I think it might have had to do with their desire to maintain a lot of interest on the tour. There was an extra element of intrigue involved with delaying the announcement that we were involved. Hopefully that made a lot of people decide to go out and buy their tickets, but I'm not so sure about that. **HP:** The fact is that you guys probably get the best night-in, night-out reaction of any band on the bill.

ZV: All the bands get a great response, and they deserve it. But our fans are definitely there and they are very enthusiastic. We've always had an amazing connection with our fans because they know we're just like them— we just happen to be the ones on stage. They can relate to us and we can relate to them. That's the whole idea behind Avenged Sevenfold. There's no big Rock Star thing going on. It's all cool, it's all real, and a lot of the problems and situations that our fans face every day are the things we sing about in our songs.



t's an approach that has worked time and time again throughout Tool's 15 year recording career... and never better than on their latest release, 10,000 Days. The simple fact of the matter is that Tool make your skin crawl. Tool *like* to make your skin crawl. Tool *live* to make your skin crawl. Sometimes it appears as if the sole artistic purpose of this highly unusual unit is to delve deep under the epidermal layers of everyone who dares listen to their hypnotic, pulsating, eclectic brand of hard rock and then start searching for an explosive, albeit messy, way out. We admit that it ain't a pretty picture, but there's little about Tool that is designed to be attractive. From the band's staunch look, to the graphically imaginative images that adorn their album covers. Tool has always been a band designed for maximum "creep" potential.

Obviously there are plenty of people out there who seem to share an

intimate understanding of Tool's creepy, netherworldly universe; the band's earlier albums, such as Undertow, Aenima and Lateralus, have each attained multi-platinum sales recognition, and 10,000 Days seems destined to pick up right where these previous efforts left off. Yes, it certainly seems that all is going exceedingly well in the off-kilter musical world created by vocalist Maynard James Keenan, guitarist Adam Jones, drummer Danny Carey and bassist Justin Chancellor.

philosophies with an almost religious fervor. But despite that initial notoriety, Vincent's popularity soon waned and by the time his path crossed with Jones' he was destitute and living on the street. Yet, that meeting with Vincent served to not only inspire Jones, in many ways if was to serve as the catalyst for Tool, a band whose music attempted to encapsulate many of Vincent's off-beat philosophies.

'When I met him, it was like finding a twin brother," said Jones of Vincent, who was to die shortly after their meeting. "For years I had been trying to put together a band that would provide people with a means of feeding off their frustrations and Vincent provided a ban-

"It's funny how some

people assume that suc-

cess has changed us."

After two more years of studying Vincent's teachings. Jones felt ready to take his musical dreams to the next step. First he contacted Keenan, a long-time friend, telling him how Tool could break down any number of musical barriers if they were to encompass Vincent's doom-laden philosophies. The singer remained totally unconvinced, preferring to keep his steady job in a pizza place rather than "risk it all" in a rock and roll band- especially one that seemed determined to be as non-commercial as possible.

'Adam kept bugging me," Keenan said. "I figured the only way to

get him off my back was just to go along with him, make some music, and prove to him that it would totally suck. That was a great plan until we got together and the music proved to be okay. From then on, every time I said 'no' to him, he'd show me another page from Vincent's book. After four months of that, I had read the entire book and finally agreed to form a band with him.

From such a strange beginning, even stranger events were soon to occur. By early 1990 Tool's founding pair were soon joined by Carey and original bassist Paul D'Amour and the unit set out to combine their various backgrounds and influences into a band that captured the flavor and feel of Vincent's writing. Their work led directly to the release of the group's

debut EP, Opiate, a snarling, tearing outpouring that tried to put to music Vincent's principles as presented in a chapter

called "The Internal Dynamics Of Suffering." Needless to say, the band's angst-filled odes were a far cry from conventional radio fodder, yet somehow the EP won an immediate and dedicated following, and Tool were on their way.

The dark, disturbing music presented on *Opiate* soon earned Tool major label attention, and by 1991 they had inked an impressive deal. Yet, having a little money in their pockets did little to

deter the band from following their musical nightmares with an even more fervent determination. Soon they were back in Grand Master Studios in Hollywood working on Undertow, an album the band was convinced could introduce hundreds of thousands to the strange teachings of Vincent. For three

months they labored until they had completed their task... and what a task it was. From the grotesque photos that adorned the album's cover and inner sleeve, to the intensely idiosyncratic music that pervaded every track, **Undertow** was a work that left a mark on anyone who heard it. It became quickly apparent that you could love Tool, or hate 'em, but there's no way that you could ignore 'em. That fact remains as strong in 2006 as it did so many years ago.

'I never started this band to make a living," Jones said, "I was fairly successful with my art career, but making music is what I wanted to do for fun. The fact is, however, that if you're fairly good, and you play live shows, the labels will find you. Then it's up to you to do something with the opportunity. I think we've done that



"It's funny how some people assume that success has changed us." Jones said. "They figure that selling albums and touring the world has robbed us of whatever it was that made us Tool. Well, to put it bluntly, they're wrong. The band may sound a little different this time, but all the ingredients that have always made Tool tick are still very

On 10,000 Days, Tool has taken some bold, inventive steps

towards widening their rock and roll universe. While the band's typically haunting lyrics and brain-scathing melodies are still present in all their twisted glory, musically Tool has expanded upon the pseudo-metallic style that characterized their previous efforts. This time around the group

has explored a more sonically diverse, though no less compelling sound spectrum that promises to win over an ever-larger legion of supporters to Tool's twisted rock and roll planet.

'We like the idea that when people put on our music they're taken to a place they just can't get to on their own," Jones said. "I think that's a very attractive element of what we do.

Tool's strange musical vision began to take shape back in 1988 when Jones moved to Hollywood from his native Illinois. According to legend, one day he wandered across a vagrant named Ronald P Vincent, whom Jones was soon to discover had once written a book called A Joyful Guide To Lachrymology. Loosely translated, "lachrymology" is the study of crying, and those who had read Vincent's book when it was first published in the late 1940s, adapted his



CONTESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

cock bands live on tour, and rock musicians, by nature, are extremely creative people. So we decided to probe the minds of rock stars, and see what fun 'n exciting ways they've come up with to pass the time while on tour. Sure, being a touring rock star is a lot fun. You perform. You conduct interviews with journalists who love your work. You party with the locals. You hang out, and sign autographs for your adoring fans. You see the world! But there are some non-glamorous aspects of life on the road, and we're not just talking about not being able to take daily showers! Sometimes, the touring lifestyle can get lonely, and somewhat boring. You miss your friends, your family, and your comfy bed. You find yourself with a lot of down time, and nothing to do buy but play video games or surf the Internet. We asked a gaggle of rock stars what else they do to kill time when on the road, and we were pleasantly surprised how, when left to their own devices, rock stars can kill time in the most exciting, creative ways.

STILL REMAINS TJ MILLER

Still Remains released their Roadrunner Records debut, **Of Love And Lunacy**, over a year ago. They have spent the past twelve months on tour, supporting the record, night in and night out. Days off are rarely on the calendar for this ambitious, smart Grand Rapids, Michigan quintet. And they like it that way. They understand that the road is the best place to expose their band to the masses. We asked singer TJ Miller what he's been doing to make the hours in between performances pass. Here's what he had to say.

"I've been playing poker," the singer reveals.
"It's \$5 to buy in! It's that one thing we look forward to doing every day!" The singer says that his poker games are somewhat low-stakes, as well. "If you get 4 or 5 people playing, we start with a couple of bucks. We have poker chips and everything." But it's not just about playing poker. The band is working on its next effort for Roadrunner, as well. "We sit in the van and record on a digital device. We have a lot of long drives on the road, so we write and record because we have so much time."
Additionally, Miller says he plays video games and works out while on tour. But he doesn't troll local towns for gyms. He brings small weight sets and jump ropes on the road with him, and also enjoys going for walks. Looks like he maintains a good cardio workout while on the road.

DRAGONFORCE HERMAN LI

Dragonforce have just released their Roadrunner Records debut, Inhuman Rampage. They also enjoyed a completely sold out inaugural tour on US soil, selling out venues from New York City to Philadelphia to Los Angeles in early spring. While the band plans to return to US touring soon, they have plenty of experience touring their native Europe. They also have come up with plenty of ways to pass the time while on tour. Chinese guitarist Herman Li, who also dabbles in martial arts, reveals what the Force Of Dragons do to keep

STILL REMAINS

themselves occupied during the down time.

"We usually wake up when the bus arrives at the venue," Li says. "We don't do anything at all. We watch movies, or mess around on the computer. We really try and do anything but play the guitar!" Given the fact that Dragonforce play at superhuman speeds, it makes sense that their guitarists don't want to play until show time!

THE RED CHORD GUY KOZOWYK

The Red Chord are a touring machine. They spend more time on the road than they do at home, and that's a fact of





life that they not only accept, but embrace. Frontman Guy Kozowyk, who barks himself raw on the band's most recent disc, the throroughly grindcore-meets-death-metal Clients, reveals several unglamorous things he does to kill time when he's not on stage.

"The last couple times we hit the road, I have had no down time on tour," the growler reveals. "I wound up doing merch for our band, which was a catastrophe. It was non-stop work to sell our gear." However, on the rare day off, he finds other ways to keep himself amused. "If you have a day off, it's because you have to do a 14-hour drive, or your van might have broken down somewhere. That said, when I am at a venue or a new town for the whole day, I keep myself busy. I'm a sucker for old arcade games, so if we get to a venue and there's Miss PacMan, I waste so much money playing that. I'm fanatical about shooting games. There is a venue, the El Toreon in Kansas City, Missouri, and I once dropped 20 bucks in quarters beating an arcade game there. 'Lethal Enforcer' is also a shoot 'em up style game that I love. It's got 'Mortal Kombat' graphics." Kozowyk also works on the road. He owns and operates Black Market Activities, a fledgling record label, and

thanks to modern conventions like cell phones and laptops, he's able to keep on top of his growing business. "The work doesn't stop because I am on tour," he says. This man must never sleep!

THE BLEEDING JENS MADSEN

You may not have heard of Canadian band The Bleeding Alarm but that's all about to change. This is a band that tours like it's going out of style. They've had a busy and extremely intense touring schedule over the past year and a half, and things don't look to slow down. They've just released a new platter, Beauty in Destruction, through immortal Records and have been working their collective arses off to support it. Guitarist Jens Madsen clocked in with how he fills his hours.

"People always comment on how busy we are and ask us how we find any time to have fun," says Jens Madsen. "What people don't realize is that with

all the craziness of being in a different city almost every day, and meeting tons of new friends at every show, comes a lot of downtime and off days here and there. We fill that time a number of different ways. whether it is writing new material, grabbing a pint at a pub, or going to Barnes & Noble, to read magazines and drink coffee." Additionally, The Bleeding Alarm have discovered that they love cheap Chinese Food buffets. "We love to just chill there, talking and eating for five or six hours. But I find that we go through stages. Sometimes, although not very often, we will be on a tour where, for one reason or another, or sometimes no reason at all, we all just kind of need our own space. During these times, we all come prepared for those dreaded 'downtimes.' You could normally find [vocalist] Charles [Furney] journaling or playing his Gameboy. [Bassist] Paul [Madsen] enjoys

his portable DVD player. [Drummer] Thomas [Karanasos] has his PSP. And you can

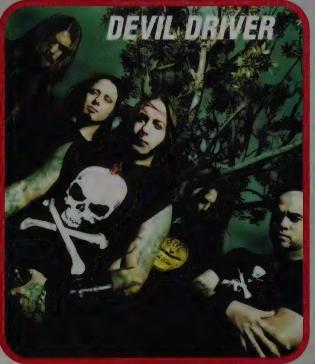
almost always find [guitarist] Kevin [Moore] sleeping in the van listening to his iPod." Also, Madsen and Furney discovered cheap movies while trekking across their native Canada last year. "We had three days off in Winnipeg," Madsen says. "We ended up finding a cheap movie theater where each movie was only two dollars. We went to twelve movies over two and a half days. We were in heaven. But we definitely needed a few days away from any sort of movie after that. Like I said, those days don't happen too regularly."

EZ FAFARA

Devildriver love to touch base with their fans while on the road. Rather than avoid their fans by sitting on their tour vehicle and watching TV or playing video games. Dez Fafara and his crew make

> and consuming libations, and extending invitations to their fans to join in the fun.

a concerted effort to hang out and enjoy quality face time with their fans. This includes BBQing



"We fire up the BBQ and drink wine when we're on the road and the weather is nice," admits Fafara. Devildriver cordially invite their tourmates and their fans to feast with them on pleasant days. "Basically, we're all about touching base with our fans, and drinking, eating, and hanging out with them. But we don't BBQ if it's 110 degrees out. But on a nice day, it's a great way to hang." Fafara, much like The Red Chord's Guy Kozowyk, works on the road, as well. He has started his own record label, dubbed Sever Records, which is distributed through DRT Entertainment. Fafara keeps his irons in his business's fire, even when he's away and on tour. Sever Records just released a debut by

Artimus Pyledriver, and Fafara suggests that you pick it up.

"We've heard some people say that this music reminds them of things they may have heard in the past, but that wasn't our original intent."

The '70s may be little more than a fading memory in the minds of those old enough to even recall that halcyon period in heavy metal music. But let it be said loudly and clearly that the classic hard rock sound of that era is alive and well... thanks in nosmall-part to the work of a Canadian quartet known as Priestess. On their debut disc, Hello Master, vocalist/guitarist Mike Heppner, guitarist Dan Wetchorn, bassist Mike Dyball and drummer Vince Nudo seem to have conveniently forgotten that their chosen style of musical expression has supposedly been out of style for three decades. On tracks like *Lay Down, Run Home* and *I Am* the Night, Colour Me Black, they've created a heavy, distorted, propulsive sound that shakes walls and brain cells with equal ease - and they've done so with a sense-ofpurpose that tells anyone with ears that this certainly isn't some sort of 21st Century rock and roll parody.

"We didn't grow up just listening to grunge or Led Zeppelin or Motley Crue," Heppner said. "We loved early Sabbath, Deep Purple, AC/DC... you know, the really *classic* bands. We loved the power of their music and the straight forward, no-compromise feel you got from listening to it. When we listen to a lot of today's rock music, we're struck by the redundancy and the pure banality of so much

BY TOM LONG

of it. We don't rely on gimmicks or on pretense—just the power of what we play. We know that this kind of music isn't necessarily what's happening for a lot of people at the moment. But it's our intention to see if we can change some of that."

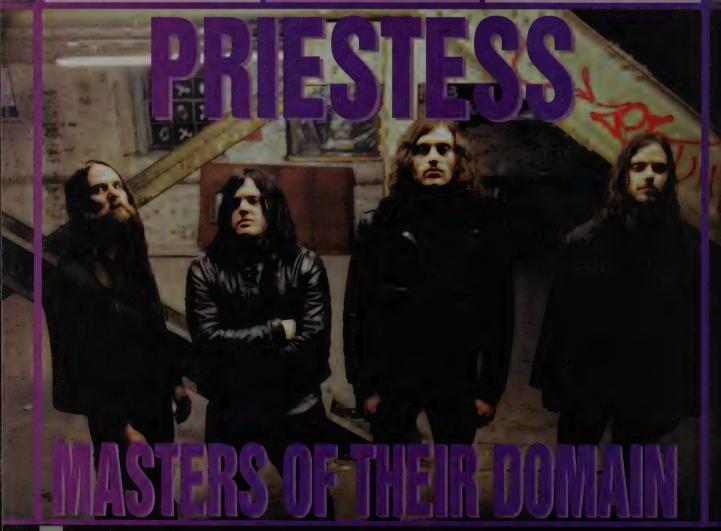
By paying homage to such riff-rock pioneers as AC/DC, Black Sabbath and Motorhead (in a back-handed, mind-trippingly innocent "hey, did we invent this?" sort of way), Priestess have managed to produce an album so un-cool, so un-hip and so un-groovy that it actually ranks among the coolest discs of 2006. Yup, this stuff is heavy in a markedly unpretentious, arena-rock sort of way... if such a thing is possible. But when you hail from Montreal, doing things in a slightly askew fashion seems to just go with the musical territory. Sequestered up in the Great White North— free from direct competition from dozens of other bands all looking for major label deals—the members of Priestess have been able to follow a path of their own choosing, with Hello Master being the headbanging byproduct of their efforts.

"Montreal is a very good place to live,"
Heppner said. "It may not have the strongest
music scene, but there are places to play,
and the people there do love rock and roll.
They may not be as 'trendy' as some people

in the States, so they're not ashamed to get behind a band like ours."

Having already toured (albeit briefly) with the likes of Motorhead, it seems that the world is beginning to pick up on the sonic rumblings of Priestess. That's a notion further supported by the fact that soon after Hello Master was put out by a small, indie label, the disc was actually picked up by a major label that just released a slightly altered version of the album in June. All of this is mighty heady stuff for these still very unassuming Canadian lads. And they each promise that no matter how many good things happen to them over the upcoming months, they will fight to maintain the down-to-earth attitude that stands at the heart of Priestess' musical philosophy.

"That's the most important thing to us," Heppner said. "We don't want the focus to be on the way we look or the way we dress. We want that focus to be on the music we play. The idea of having a major label release our album is great for us, but it's also a little intimidating. We've always liked the idea of doing things our way and not feeling pressured by anyone or anything. We don't want that to change just because a big label is involved. We may be young, but we know what we want, and that's to always make our music the star of our show."



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To me, it's always been about more than just standing on stage and playing music."

ob Zombie has never been one to shock or surprise. So it was certainly not unexpected when this surrounded by the somewhat "out-there" latest album, Educated Horses, in the midst of his latest live set. Heck, after the dizzying array of explosions, lighting effects and the evening's festivities, the sight of Zombie's macabre on-stage visions almost seemed ordinary amidst the extraordinary. For more than 90 minutes, Zombie had drawn material from his three solo discs (which also include Hellbilly Deluxe and The Sinister Urge), and presented a smat-

lic rock and roll.

When I played Ozzfest last summer (he headlined the Second Stage), the focus was really on the music," he said. "I left almost in the context of that tour and that environment. But now, with a new album to promote, I want to take things back in the other direction. There are no limits to what we might do on stage this time."

Taking the stage amid the fury and the glory generated by his overworked why he ranks among the contemporary music form's master showmen. Performing along-side his well-rehearsed team of talented side-men (including former Marilyn

Manson quitarist John 5 drummer Tommy Clufetos and long-time bassist Rob hear the things they know, but you also want to give them a good taste of what you've been up to. I think we've presented

didn't know what to talk about first. They had enjoyed to varying degrees the efforts of opening acts, Lacuna Coil and Bullet For My Valentine—both on the cutting edge of the contemporary Euro-metal scene. They bells & whistles" that had accompanied Zombie's set. But clearly they all seemed to have been totally blown away by the musical efforts of Zombie and his not-so-merry men. "Man, that guy rocks!" said one wide-eyed fan sporting a fresh-out-of-the-box Zombie T-shirt. "I have all of his albums, but I had never seen Zombie on-stage before. Believe me, it was worth the wait."

For his part, Zombie was equally

pleased with the results of the evening's proceedings. As he relaxed his show, surround-

"Blasko" Nicholson), Zombie HORSE SENSE

tering of "classics" from his platinumcovered '90s association with White Zombie -- all to the crowd's delight. But rather than merely allowing his music to propel the night's proceedings along, Zombie had pulled out all the stops in order to create a sight and sound extravaganza that few in attendance would soon forget.

The fans who come to one of my shows— especially when they're in a bigger place— expect something spe-cial," Zombie said. "They want pure enter-tainment and they want it constantly. I know that some fans have come back three or four times on this tour just so they can fully absorb everything we have going on up there. To me, it's always been about more than just standing on stage and playing music. I always want to surprise them." During his decade-and-a-half in the

hard rock spotlight, surprising his faithful following both on-album and on-stage has become something of a tradition for Zombie. In fact, it's often seemed that just as fans believed they had begun to decipher the "secret" behind the Zombie sound and style, this horror-flick-fanatic (and highly successful director of such cult classic hits as House of 1000 Corpses and The Devil's Rejects) went and threw 'em all a major league change up! Never has that been more apparent than on his current road outing, where the out-of-the-grave zaniness that marked some of his previous road excursions has been blended with an almost carnival-like freak show filled with flashing lights and the non-stop roar of great, metalwandered the stage like a man possessed, twirling his yard-long semi-dreadlocks in time to the music's hypnotic beat and eyeing the crowd like a sinner at a church picnic. Drawing equally from the material featured on his three solo discs-but paying extra attention to the new songs presented on Educated Horses— Zombie's set never allowed the crowd to come up for air, tearing through such favorites as Living Dead Girl, Dragula, Dead Girl Superstar and Foxy, Foxy with barely a second's pause between songs. Needless to say, the crowd ate it up like it was manna delivered directly from rock and roll heaven... or in Zombie's case, perhaps that place of origin was rock and

'This whole tour has been really good so far," Zombie said. "Working with these musicians has been very motivational for me. John 5, in particular, has brought some amazing stuff to the shows-he's just an incredible guitarist. And it's nice to hear the way the crowd has responded to many of the new songs. That's always an interesting situation for me. You know they come to

ed by the standard stream of local celebs, record label execs and wide-eyed wellwishers, he seemed to be very much a man in his native element. Sure, in the three year span since his previous album release and headlining tour he had established himself as a major Hollywood "player" thanks to the success of his two movies. That had delayed aspects of Zombie's music career... but quite obviously, it had done little to derail it. As Educated Horses continued its ride up he charts, and as his latest tour maintained on its sold-out path of rock and roll mayhem, Rob Zombie clearly seemed to be the master of all he surveved.

I don't know if I really feel content with what I've accomplished," he said. "But in some ways I do feel satisfied. It's been a very interesting couple of years. A lot of people wondered if I could balance my movie and music careers. But to my mind they always went hand-in-hand. It was just a matter of finding the time to focus on each of them. I think I've shown that I've



s proven by both their new album, **Christ Illusion**, and their starring turn on the recentlycompleted *Unholy Alliance* road trek, there's no doubt that
Slayer remain the heavyweight champions of the nard rock
world. Despite having been absent from the music scene for the
last four years these L.A.-based power rockers (vocalist/bassist Tom
Araya, guitarists Kerry King and Jeff Hannerman and drummer Dave
Lombardo) are still without peer when it comes to laying down the heaviest riffs, the most hell-bent lyrics and the most blood-curdling vocals in
the planet. After all, who else can match Slayer in terms of sheer, unadultererated metal power? Metallica? C'mon, they sometimes seem like
they're on the verge of evolving into pseudo-pop wimps. Slipknot?
Please! That unit's latest effort seems tame even in comparison to their

own earlier disasterpieces. The horde of mindless European Death Metal merchants? Slayer exude more talent in their midnight spittle than those bands do when all combined on their best day. Just one listen to the Slaymasters latest riffriddled opus tells you that despite the number of poseurs that may currently want to challenge Slayer for their metallic throne, these once and future Kings Of Crunch are still totally in charge. Recently we spoke to a surprisingly candid Araya about exactly what keeps the Slayer metal machine in top-notch working order.

Hit Parader: It's been five years since your last album, God Hates Us All. Did you have a lot of extra material stored up for

Tom Araya: Not really. Most of the material we recorded for

this album had been around for a couple of years, at least, and we had rehearsed those songs to the point where we knew we wanted to record them. We didn't go into the studio with a lot of extra songs— basically we recorded just what we knew we wanted to be on the album. We could have done more, and the record label probably would have liked a few extra "bonus" tracks to throw around. But that wasn't what we had in mind this time. We went in and just got the job done.

HP: But you missed the once-in-a-lifetime 6/6/06 'target' date for the album's release.

TA: Yeah... too bad. We had to settle for originally planning *The Unholy Alliance* tour to start on that special date—though we eventually had to move it back to June 10. At first we thought we could get everything done in time for the album to come out for the start of the tour, but as usual, unexpected things happen and everything gets a little delayed. That's always the way it seems to work for us. We didn't want to rush things just to have an album ready by that date. We were so excited about the way things were sounding that we all decided to take our time and make sure it turned out just the way we wanted it to.

HP: How would you describe the contents of this album?

TA: It's getting to be a cliche to say that it sounds like a Slayer album, but that's the truth. I think anyone who's familiar with us understands exactly what that means. We're not about to change up what we do very much at this point in our lives. But at the same time, whenever we go in to record a new album, we know new stuff is gonna happen, and we welcome it. You put this album on, and you know right away that it's a Slayer album, but as you listen to it, you begin to realize that there are a few things going on that you might not have expected... that's good!

HP: is there one song on the album that stands out for you?

TA: That changes from minute to minute, but it seems as if Eyes of the Insane has been getting a lot of attention. It touches on what's going on in the War in Iraq, and how the soldiers are forced to deal with the incred ibly difficult situations that face them on a day-to-day basis. Some of them just can't handle it. It goes beyond being wounded in battle— some of them are wounded in their minds from what they see and do over

BY PATRICK LAMES

there. You hear about Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome a the time, but it appears as if the military isn't providing the kind of support that these soldiers need to deal with what they're encountering over there. It's a very important subject.

HP: As you grow a little older, do you find it more difficult to generate the passion, rage and power required to make a great Slayer album?

TA: Once we all get together, it all seems to come to us very naturally. Nothing is forced. I think we realized a long time ago that this is who we are as people, and this is what we are as a band, and that's not about to change. We're already looking ahead towards the next album and the future of *The Unholy Alliance*. We're not about to stop for anything.

HP: Let's talk about The Unholy Alliance tour a bit. How has that gone?



GRUNGH

BUNGA

TA: It's gone even better than we could have hoped

for. When our manager first came up with the idea a few years ago, he already knew that it could be something important. Even then he wanted to make *The Unholy Alliance* something of a "brand name" like *Ozzfest* has become. The goal from the start has been to make this an annual event, and eventually take it around the world. The big

trick for us was making sure that we had a package that would feature us... but not just be us. I think everyone did a good job with that.

HP: How has it been touring with the likes of Mastodon and Lamb of God?

TA: They each bring something very interesting to the table, and that's exactly what we were looking for. Both of those bands play different styles of metal, so fans who come to the shows are experiencing a wide spectrum of the kind of metal music that's out there at the moment. Then you throw in a band like Children of Bodom or Thine Eyes Bleed— which is the band my brother plays in— and you get a very solid, well-formed metal package. It's something the fans have really been digging. HP: So it's definite that The Uniony Alliance is going to become an annual

"We're not about to change up what we do very much at this point in our lives"

TA: That's the plan. Of course, things could change, but that's the intent at the moment. I don't think that we necessarily have to be on the bill every year, but we'll definitely be part of it one way or another. It's really nice to know that we've reached a point in our career when we can give something back to the fans and to the younger bands that are struggling for recognition. We remember how tough that can be. But we can't promise anyone success. All we can do is hopefully provide them with a forum and then let them take it from there









All That Remains

Jeanne Sagan/bass Oli Herbert/guitar

Bad Acid Trip

Caleb Schneider/bass Keith Aazami/guitar

Between the Buried and Mo

Paul Waggoner/guitar Dustie Waring/guitar

Bleeding Through

Scott Danough/guitar Brian Leppke/guitar Ryan Wombacher/bass Derek Youngsma/drums

DragonForce

Herman Li/guitar Sam Totman/guitar Dave Mackintosh/drums

Hatebreed

Matt Byrne/drums

Lacuna Coil

Marco Coti Zelati/bass

System of a Down

John Dolmayan/drums

Unearth

Ken Susi/guitar Buz McGrath/guitar Mike Justian/drums

As I Lay Dying

Clint Norris/bass

In Flames

Peter Iwers/bass Daniel Syensson/drums

Killswitch Engage

Mike D'Antonio/bass

shadows Fall

Matt Bachand/guitar Paul Romanko/bass Jason Bittner/drums

Through the Eyes of the Dead

Justin Longshore/guitar Chris Anderson/guitar Jake Ososkie/bass

Trivium

Travis Smith/drums

Shadows Fall

Matt Bachand/guitar Paul Romanko/bass Jason Bittner/drums

THE ULTIMATE THREE RING SUMMER CIRCUS

Ibanez & TAMA are proud to be the exclusive guitar, bass & drum sponsors of the three hottest tours of Summer 2006... Ozzfest, Sounds of the Underground & Strhess tour. is they've proven to everyone who has witnessed their co-headlining shows at this summer's Ozzfest, for Disturbed making music is clear room than just a means of unleasting pent-up aggressions or showcasing their theatrical bent. For vocalist David Drainian, quitarist David Drainian, quitarist David Drainian, description and bassest Fuzz, creating their distinctive brand of hard rock is their forum for communicating complex ideas and relaying pertailed philosophies. As proven throughout this Chicago-based unit's latest disc, Ten Thousand Fists, music is an arr form where aggression and anger never need to take a back seat to thought and concept. It is that special symbiotic relationship between the power of their guitars and the power of their words that has made this group an on-going sensation upon the heavy, music scene: Following as it does in the platinum value of both their debut disc. The Sickness, and its follow-up, Believe, Disturbed's third studio outing shows a more expansive, though no long his band's latest master-work:

Hit Parader: How has your Ozzfest run been going?

David Draiman: It's been going great - which is exactly what we expected. When we signed on for this tour we realized that we were going to be shouldering a lot of the musical load, and that was fine with us. We were very aware that Ozzy wasn't going to be performing at a lot of the shows, so it was going to be us and System of a Down at the top of the bill. But we just went out there and did our show—the same as we would have on any other occasion. You can't replace Ozzy... that's insane! All you can do is just give the best possible performance every night.

HP: You've managed to include a lot of your new songs-including your current single Just Stop— in the Ozzfest set. Do you feel like the new

material is fitting in well?

DD: The new songs are fitting in better than we even could have imagined. But it's not a great surprise to us because in many ways Ten Thousand Fists drew on the best elements from our first two albums combined them and expanded upon them. So to hear that the new songs fit in isn't a shock at all.

to make good use of everything we come up with.

HP: Your previous tours have drawn both praise and controversy. Has that continued this time out?

DD: We certainly hope the praise part continues, and to some extent we expect the controversy to always be there as well-but perhaps somewhat different way. Going back a few years, a lot of the initial interest in our live show was focused on what we were going to do at the beginning of the set. Was I going to be strapped in an electric chair? Was I going to be in a straight jacket? Were we going to show footage of war atrocities? It made people wonder. That was a good thing. But it was not done merely to shock. It was there to visually communicate the same disturbing feeling that we wanted our music to present. I think this time we start off perhaps a bit more slowly, but it builds into something even more intense, and perhaps even more controversial

HP: Are you ever concerned that the more outrageous aspects of the live set have camouflaged some of the inherent power of your music?

DD: There is that risk. We fully understand that. In fact, I can say that one

XPECT A LITTLE CONTROVE

HP: Was there a great deal of inherent pressure upon Disturbed knowing that there were so many people holding high expectations for Ten Thousand Fists?

DD: Even as we began writing for this album we knew that we wanted to have that feeling that we still had something to prove to ourselves. We didn't want to sequester ourselves off in some exotic studio in some distant land and act like we were above everything because we had made two successful albums. We had a bit of a punch-the-clock mentality as we recorded, a very workman-like approach, and that was good. It made it easier for us to avoid the pressure that could have been there. We just put our heads down and plowed ahead. The record label gave us a lot of freedom, and our friends understood that the studio wasn't a place to come and hang out. They gave us the distance we needed while providing the support we wanted.

HP: When you're working on an album, how many songs almost make it onto the disc but end up getting left behind?

DD: Not that many. I think for this one we recorded almost the exact amount of songs that eventually made it onto the album. We may have one or two extras that we'll probably keep in case there's a need for a song of ours on a movie soundtrack or something like that. We're very lucky in that we've got the whole songwriting process down pretty well a this point. There aren't too many false leads that go to dead ends. We try to waste nothing. In fact it's kind of a running joke between Dan and the rest of us where he'll bring up a certain guitar part, and if it doesn't get used in a certain song, we know we'll hear it again sooner or later. We try of the primary reasons we have toned down some of the more theatrical elements of the live show is to allow the fans' attention to be placed more fully upon the music. We think that's incredibly important, especially with songs like the ones presented on Ten Thousand Fists. The intensity of the band must speak for itself. We don't need to rely on theatrics in order to gain attention.

HP: A lot of bands who've gone platinum with their first albums have then turned their backs on the "heavy" kind of music that first won them fame.

Was that ever a temptation for Disturbed?

DD: All you have to do is listen to this album or come to one of our shows to know the answer to that one. We're very pleased with our musical identity. We've worked hard to create the kind of image we have, and this album does nothing but reinforce the notion that we're a very heavy band, and proud to be that.

HP: After spending so much time on the road, are there still places that

Disturbed hasn't toured?

DD: There were a lot of places that we didn't get to on the last tour, and we plan on getting there as fast as we can this time. There are other places we've visited briefly, and we want to spend more time there this year. We know full-well that the vast majority of our time is going to be spent in North America, and that's fine with us. But we want to get back to Japan and Australia and Brazil. Those are all amazing places with amazing fans. We think that it's very important for us to travel world-wide because our message isn't just for people in America— it's for people all over the world.

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PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



"I was getting myself into some bad personal situations."

ully Erna was in pain. He had just come back from an hour-long trip to a Los Angeles-area emergency room after being bit on his upper leg by a spider. It was only hours before he and his Godsmack bandmates— guitarist Tony Rombola, drummer Shannon Larkin and bassist Robbie Merrill— were scheduled to make a high-profile appearance on The Jimmy Kimmel Show, and Erna was far-from-happy. As he limped around the band's backstage dressing room, a protective bandage on his leg, Erna seemed to be miffed at seemingly everyone and everything. Once again, he feared, life had literally and figuratively bit him on the ass.

"This is just about the last thing I need right now," he said. "I only hope I don't have some sort of bad reaction to either the bite or what they gave me in the hospital. Can't you just picture me going on national television and having some sort

of negative reaction in front of 20 million people?"
Perhaps Erna was only half-joking about his fears of collapsing live on TV. And, in fact, that night's performance went off without a hitch-serving as a near-perfect means for promoting Godsmack's latest chart-topping album, IV. But after going through what he called "one of the toughest period of my life" back in 2005, it's little wonder that Erna still occasionally looks over his shoulder wondering what unexpected "demon" may next attempt to derail his life's ambitions. Despite all the financial success, international acclaim and artistic credibility that his success with Godsmack has provided over the last decade, the usually tough-as-nails Erna still retains a surprisingly vulnerable soul.

"I do tend to be concerned about a lot of things that go on in my life," he said. "For whatever reason those things tend to build up on me and put me in a very bad situation. That's what happened in 2005. I was getting myself into some bad personal situations, which resulted in too much drinking, and every time I felt like I was beginning to pull myself out of that mess, I'd get a phone call or receive some mail that would throw me right back to the bottom. It got to be really bad. Here I was, getting ready to make a new album, with my band hard at work having already

started recording 40 songs, and I hadn't even written one lyric. That pressure made things even worse for me. But one day I just made a decision to pull myself up by the boot straps and realize I had to change things around. The old proverb 'This too shall pass,' became my mantra. I just looked at my problems as honestly as I could and forged ahead."

The results of Erna's efforts to cleanse any and all problems from his life not only managed to lift him from his state of depression, but also helped open exciting new creative doors for Godsmack. As shown throughout IV, this is a band that has now clearly grown out of the "New Metal" categorization that earmarked such earlier efforts as Godsmack, Awake and Faceless (discs that have sold a combined total of over six million copies) and carried them to the forefront of the 21st Century hard rock scene. Indeed, there are few bands operating in the contemporary music kingdom that can now hold a candle to the Smack in terms of sheer rock and roll creativity. To Erna's ears to differences between his band's current work and their past efforts is nothing less than night-and-day.

'We wanted to make sure that we did things differently this time," he said. "That was kind of the whole point of this album. We didn't want to rely on what we had done before. When we'd do something and then ask 'Does that really sound like a Godsmack song?' we'd immediately say, 'Hey, we did it, so it is a Godsmack song!' We threw out the rules on this album. We wanted to keep the power and integrity that have always marked our work, but we were also determined to bring in more melody and emotion. It's like we've added

another entire dimension to what we do. While some fans have been caught somewhat off-guard by Godsmack's decision to ostensibly turn their backs on the metal world and focus in on their more melodic hard rock persona, others have quickly embraced the Smack's new

artistic direction. Clearly, this is a band that still rocks as hard and as loud as just about any platinum-selling band on the planet. But on songs like Living In Sin and their new disc's lead single, Speak there's undoubtedly a different musical dynamic at work here... one that stands in stark contrast to what played a vital role in the creation on such early band standards as Keep Away, I Stand Alone and Voodoo.

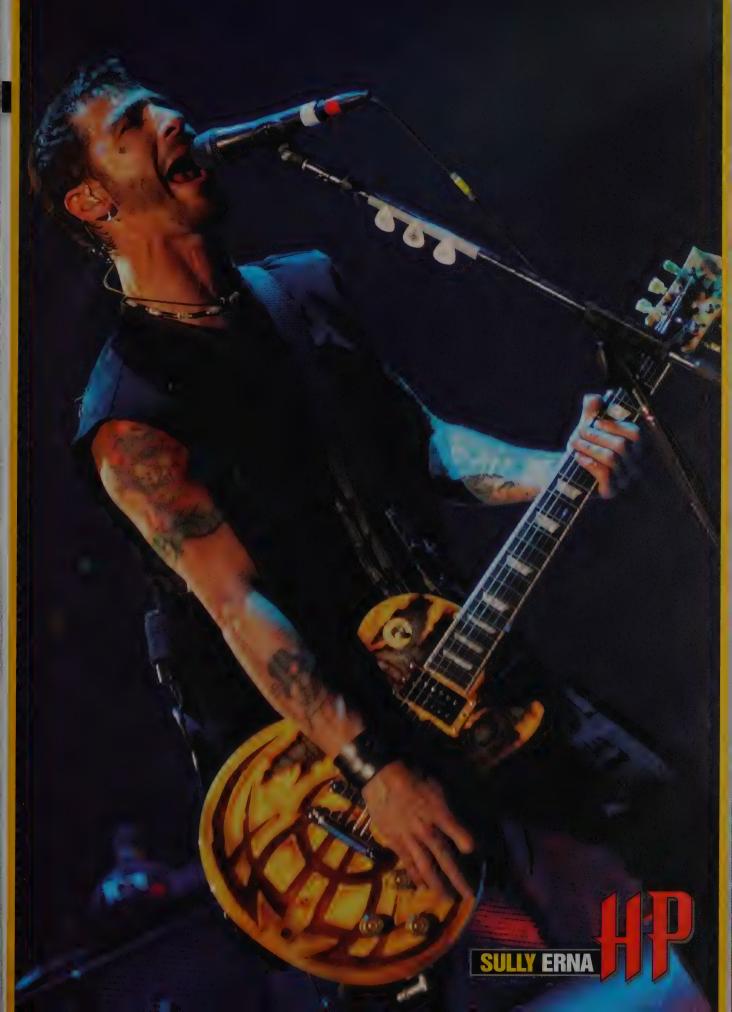
"This is still Godsmack, with all that implies both good and bad, Erna said. "I don't want to give anyone the impression that we've wimped out in any way. But this is our fourth full album, and at this point in a band's career a certain degree of maturity begins to set in You start to understand who and what you are as a band better than before and you feel more comfortable with toying with the 'formula' a bit. The results in this case are just as intense as ever- but they are a little different.'

In case fans were worried that the combination of Erna's recentlyconquered state of depression and the band's desire to shake up their approach would result in a totally self-possessed offering from Godsmack, the group has offered up their video for Speak as proof that all such concerns remain unfounded. With its penchant for presenting a seemingly endless array of jacked-up hot-rods, souped-up bikes and fuel-burning dragsters, the clip is a far cry from the "funny as a heart attack" attitude that marked many of the band's previous video efforts.

"It's just a white guy's attempt to show off a little 'bling,'" Erna joked. "We thought about the best way to present the video for Speak, and we went through a variety of very interesting, but also very serious proposals. Finally, I came up with the idea of just doing something totally as eye-candy. Forget about what the song is saying; just present something that's fun to look at and fun to make. I love bikes- I ride mine all the time. So I invited some friends down to do some amazing stunts, and we put those all into the video. Once again, it's something a little unexpected for us.

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PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



ROARING BACK

BY P.J. MERKLE

then you ask them about their current condition. Metallica insist that these days they're feeling just fine. Despite being absent from the heat of the hard rock was for the better part of the last two years (a haps highlighted by their "Salute to a labbath" performance at last winter's Rock "Roll Hall of Fame tribute), drummer Last Ulrich, guitarist Kirk Hammett guitarist/vocalist James

He to and

has sold over 50 million albums during their historic two-decade-plus career, and helped establish the precedents against which all other metal acts must be measured has the right to act and feel any damn way they choose. But as time finally grows near for this legendary West Coast unit to unleash their latest studio collection upon an anxiously-awaiting world, perhaps we wouldn't be too shocked to learn that there were actually a few sweaty palms and nervous feet among the legendary Metallimen.

"We've always gone about our business without paying too much attention to anything else," Ulrich said. "Our lives have expanded over the years to include families and outside

intenesis, but Metallica

what we do. That's never going to change."

As Ulrich indicated, it would appear that in mid-2006 some things have definitely changed in the world of Metallica. while others have amained slucially the same Today, these are more many monay discussions may business means might alley me Metallimen. And while the steamful devo-

tion to
the group that has
brought them untold fame and
fortune remains intense, their focus simply isn't
the same as it was during the halcyon times
some 20 years ago when the band produced
such incendiary discs as ...And Justice For All.
Master of Puppets and their legendary "black"
alsum, In the pour years that they now passed

Robert Trujillo swear that they feel no pressure vinen it comes to reasoning their position on the preeminent heavy metal band in the world. Perhaps a group that

" Metallica is still so central to what

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since they released their controversial metal monster, St. Anger, the band has solidified their lineup with the inclusion of Trujillo, while Hettield has grown more comfortable with his "clean and sober" lifestyle. But, despite whatever superficial changes may alter the Metallica landscape, the band members state that the core of their musical identity remains as strong as ever.

"No matter how long we may be apart, when we get together the music is always special," Hammett said. "We can fall into the groove together so quickly. I don't think very much about this band has ever really been planned. Stuff sort of

just happens

Reacting In the needs and desires of their ever-level for use has always been among Matallica's number strengths. They may continue

to evolve with the times,
but they remain steadlisth loyal to the rockcold principles that
with a wid unit so
will be so long.
But with a few
new age lines
on their
faces.

WHITE IN THE IN

garnered a well-deserved rep for being among the hardest partying bands in the metal world. And they may not dress exactly like they did 20 years ago when an unwashed black T-shirt was considered the quintessence of fashion flair. But just as some things have changed for Metallica, one vital thing have stayed very much the same.

Whenever these metal masters gather together in a place filled with their amps, their guitars and their drums (be it a concert stage or a recording studio), the sounds that emanate invariably retain much of the power, drive and aggression that has long distinguished their career. Sure, the songs presented by these Bay Area Bashers are today more sophisticated, complex and multidimensional than those created by the fledgling unit of the early '80s. But at its heart, their music remains as loyal as ever to the rock-solid metal principles that have long served as the foundational elements of the Metallica empire.

"I believe we'd always prefer if everyone focused in on our music rather than anything else," Hammett said. "Metallica has always been about setting rock and roll precedents— not about setting fashion or cultural precedents. And as far as the music goes I think there are many direct links between the music the band is making now

and the music they made in the past."

So what's really going on inside the world of Metallica? By now we've all heard the various rumors concerning the band's latest recordings— mostly how the group's in-studio "jams" have yielded some of their heaviest tracks in a decade, and how the production skills of the legendary Rick

Rubin have inspired the group to turn back towards their "core" metal principles.

We've heard tales
of how Trujillo's
intensity and precision
have provided the by of
with a solid support that
has allowed them to pursu
a "classic" Metallica sound.
And we've learned that Hetfield

eems happier and more focused

than he's been in years. Indeed, it seems that each one of those factors have layed an important role in shaping the music that Metallica will bring forth on their next album.

"We never really know what's going to hap pen next," Hammett said: "That's part of the fun. We didn't necessarily plan on white long breaks. between albums, they just sort of happen. We've actually been kind of busy... at least for us! We were on the road for a long time after **St. Anger** came out. We needed a break. Things happen. So when we got back into the studio we were all anxious to see where the music would go."

It would seem that no matter what happens to Metallica in the weeks and months to come, there will be a loyal audience waiting to devour what ever this band produces. Despite a number of younger, heavier and hungrier bands that have come along in recent days, there's no question that Metallica remain the single most potent force on the American metal scene. Just one solid salvo of new material and a single announcement of impending tour dates will prove more-thanenough to rally the faithful and bring them running back to the shelter provided by this band's until a brand of metallic thunder.

"The danger is to grow complacent more than it is to grow tired," Ulrich said. "You can always take time off, but the question become and have what it takes to go to the edge appin after that? I know right now that we do."

ling inner-band politics etallica may not look exactly like they did son 20 years ago when first en erged on the metal scene. They may not and exactly like they did 20 years ago when they

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we do; that's never going to change.'

HIT PARADER 43



A METAL CELEBRATION



BY ANDY SECHER

Through changing

times and shifting

musical tastes

we have proudly

stayed the course.



ly the entire history of the rock form. We were there when the Beatles and Stones helped launch the British Invasion back in the

mid-'60s. We were there when the likes of Hendrix and Zeppelin began to expand the artistic bounds of the contemporary music form—with **HP** often serving as the initial media vehicle through which such stellar performers made contact with their budding fan base. We were there when Sabbath, Aerosmith, Kiss and Priest gave rise to the '70s hard rock scene—while we were simultaneously giving due credit to the Ramones, Sex Pistols and Cars for helping to launch the New Wave sound.

Then in 1979 something special happened; we became the first magazine in the world to turn our attentions exclusively upon the hard rock/heavy metal form. Forget New Wave, Old Wave, Next Wave, whatever. We wanted to rock... and rock hard! Hit Parader placed a young Eddie Van Halen on our first "all metal" issue, and we haven't looked back since. Over the next

few years we helped give substance to the New Wave of British Heavy Metal in the mid-'80s, and helped launch the West Coast Metal Explosion which saw the likes of Motley Crue make the world aware that there was something wildly exciting going on in the American hard rock scene. When a young band known as Metallica was still headlining clubs and struggling on an indie label, we decided to put them on the cover... much to the surprise of fans more

accustomed to seeing the likes of Poison and Ratt.

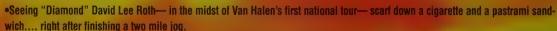
As the scope of our power grew—becoming internationally recognized as the American source for the latest in heavy metal news and information—Hit Parader expanded its base, starting a record label called Titanium that helped bring the band Badlands (featuring former Ozzy guitarist Jake E. Lee) to the metal masses. As both HP and metal itself continued to grow, so did our "feuds" with various key groups. We went tooth-and-nail with Dokken (who apparently didn't like the fact that we contin-

ually commented on the less-than-friendly relationship that existed between vocalist Don Dokken and guitarist George Lynch.) We felt the ire of Quiet Riot (a band we took particular pleasure in tweaking), whose balding vocalist Kevin DuBrow said that he enjoyed using this fine publication when he ran out of toilet paper. And we particularly



500 ISSUES OF MEMORIES

During the decades it's taken to create 500 issues of **Hit Parader**, we've naturally encountered the greats, the near-greats and the not-sogreats as we've gone about our daily business of covering the heavy metal scene. We've been fortunate enough to travel from Boston to Budapest, from Tokyo to Topeka, from Rio to Grand Rapids in our quest to deliver the best rock and roll stories in the world. We've spent time on the road, at home and in the studio with the biggest stars— Ozzy Osbourne, Kurt Cobain, Robert Plant, Axl Rose, Angus Young and Eddie Van Halen to name but a few— as well as with those who deemed themselves worthy of such stellar treatment. Obviously, it's all added up to an amazing experience, one filled with a flood of incredible memories, some of which (at least the ones we can print without bringing undue embarrassment to those involved... including ourselves) we recall here.



- •Hearing Ozzy Osbourne describe his then-recent discovery of an "incredible, thin, blond guitarist" who turned out to be Randy Rhoads.
- •Watching a playful Bon Scott lock the bathroom door in AC/DC's dressing room, in the process preventing a very "needy" Angus Young from getting in.
- •Seeing Metallica in a tiny Brooklyn club in 1982, blowing everyone away with the power and passion of their sound.
- •Noticing the "not really there" look in Layne Staley's eyes as he struggled to discuss the music of Alice In Chains.
- . Meeting Guitar God Ritchie Blackmore for the first time—right before he split from Deep Purple to form the first version of Rainbow.
- •Watching Soundgarden's Chris Cornell and Kim Thayil sit down in a New York restaurant, read the menu, and then immediately want to leave.
- Having Slash hand us \$20 upon our first meeting with Guns 'N Roses in a dingy L.A. rehearsal hall and then telling us to make a beer run.









vexed Guns N' Roses (apparently for delving too deeply into subject matters other than their musical skills) who singled out both the magazine and its editor for some particularly pithy commentary in their song Get Into the

We took it all in stride, for we knew that with a little power always comes a lot of controversy. Our attitude was, is and will always be: "Love us... hate us... but never ignore us!" It's the same philosophy we've offered to hundreds of bands that we've covered-often while sharing time on a tour bus or backstage dressing room. Some have listened... some haven't. Either way, our rela-





tionship with the vast majority of the heavy metal community has formed a

symbiotic bond that has helped catapult many of those acts, as well as this particular rock and roll rag, to the very apex of rock and roll fame and infamy. Hey, it all just goes

with the territory! In the early '90s, as the face of the hard rock form changed, so did Hit Parader. While some of our late-arriving magazine compatin-

ment by focusing their attentions on the

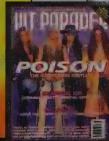
likes of Warrant and Cinderella, we did our best to move on, embracing the likes of Soundgarden, Nirvana and Alice In Chains long before it was fashionable to do so. A new wind was blowing, and it was time to alter direction. ever-so-slightly. But just as some of these "grunge" gods began to make their presence felt, we also proudly stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the likes of Pantera, Tool, Korn and Rage Against the Machine as they battled to keep metal traditions alive-while creating exciting and unexpected new artistic precedents.

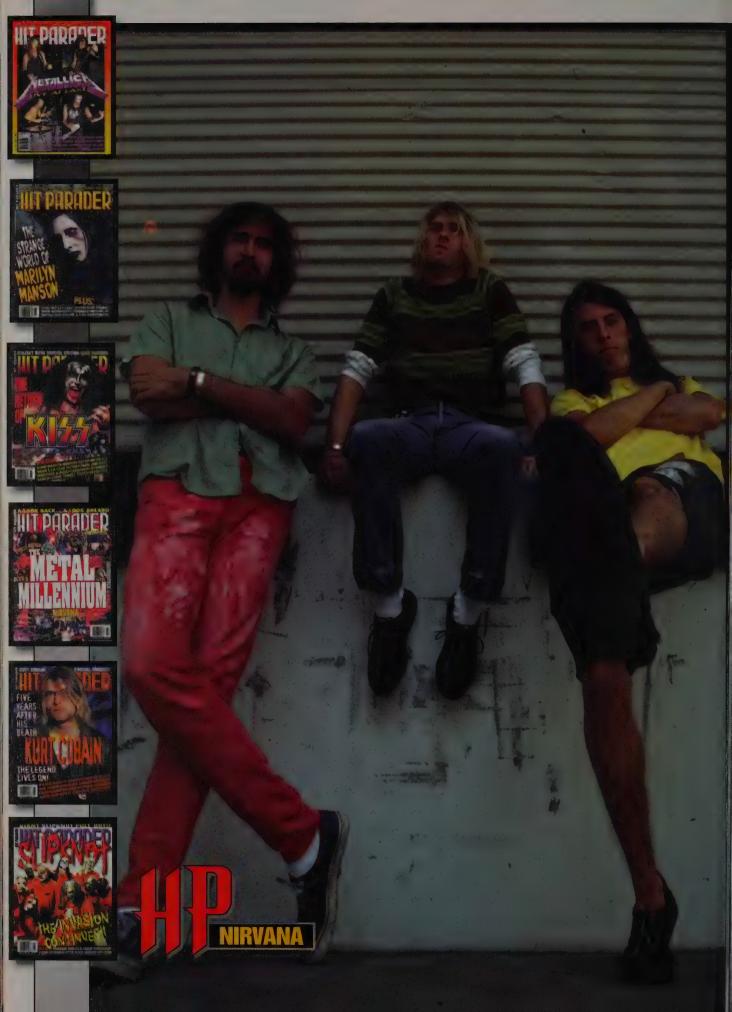




- Hanging out in a hotel room with Jimmy Page and Robert Plant, both of whom seemed to want to discuss anything other than the music they made together in Led Zeppelin.
- Hearing his fellow rockers hoot-'n-howl at Whitesnake's David Coverdale as he walked around a hotel pool in Rio de Janeiro dressed only in a skin-tight speedo.
- Getting stuck in a car with Tommy Lee (pre-Pamela Anderson) and Mick Mars of Motley Crue and having Tommy go into great detail about how a woman had bit him "in a bad place" the night before.
- Watching Aerosmith's Steven Tyler cut "scratch" vocals in a rural studio in upstate Massachusetts.
- Hearing Megadeth's Dave Mustaine dump on his former bandmates in Metallica—then totally deny doing so just a few weeks later.
- •Feeling the tensions housed within Rage Against the Machine towards the end of their final tour.
- Having Ronnie James Dio knock on our hotel room door at 6AM in Tokyo to apologize for forgetting to wake us up for the show the night before.
- Walking down a guiet London street and having a limo pull up and the Scorpions' Klaus Meine pop out to say hello.
- Listening to Dee Snider espouse the "intricacies" of Twisted Sister.
- •Watching various fans run up to Tom Araya and shout "Slayer" at the top of their lungs right in the laid-back frontman's face.
- Simply watching people's reactions as a boa-clad Marilyn Manson casually strolled down a New York street.
- Listening to Godsmack's Sully Erna as he descried his fascination with the Wicca religion.
- Watching W.A.S.P.'s Blackie Lawless smear fake blood on an all-too-willing female "victim" during that band's early club days in LA.
- •Seeing the bevy of girls trail into Def Leppard's dressing rooms... all seemingly unaware that their brightly colored backstage passes were actually overtly suggestive.
- Watching Judas Priest's Rob Halford stand out in the freezing cold—dressed only in a T-shirt—signing autograph-after-autograph for his faithful fans.
- Listening to Rob Zombie explain his decidedly off-beat film philosophies.







As "old guard" bands like Kiss, Iron Maiden and Metallica continued to rock on, Hit Parader remained one of their primary sources for dispersing key news and information to their fans. Of course, by the '90s, the forces at MTV had grown to the point where they provided a logical (and far faster) alternative for breaking rock and roll news, once again forcing us to change the nature of our coverage. In place of news columns and information features, we began to pres-

And as the New Millennium broke, our deter

as if metal had come full circle—a form that

could celebrate its long and glorious history,

vet one determined to continue pushing cre-

decided to utilize our unique position as the

long-time chroniclers of the metal form to

P create a series of on-going special issues including, The Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal, the Heavy Metal Hall of Fame and

Type various All-Time Metal Top 100 editions.

Quite obviously, our faith in heavy metalin all its varied guises, permutations and styles— has never wavered!

Sure, these days there remain Quite obviously, our faith in heavy metal-

ative boundaries. We here at Hit Parader

mination to maintain our role as the quintessential Voice of

new decade and a new century, a strange amalgam of "old

Heavy Metal gained even more momentum. With the advent of a

school" metal ideals and "new school" philosophies seemed to

meet head-on— with the resulting musical melange proving to

be both fascinating and daunting. As a new generation of bands

along-side the likes of Black Sabbath and Judas Priest, it seemed

such as Disturbed, Godsmack, Mudvayne and Slipknot toured

ent more in-depth interviews and personality profiles with the likes of Marilyn Manson and Rob Zombiein the process further cementing our reputation as the place to go for the inside word on metal action.

doubters both at the record labels and in the mainstream media who continually seem to express the belief that heavy metal has seen better days, that the form's Golden Age was actually little more than a fast-fading memory. But we have always known differently. We knew that as long as there were fans out there with fears, hopes, dreams and frustrations, there would be the need for great heavy metal bandsand a great heavy metal magazine. And today, as yet another

amazing heavy metal renaissance seems on the verge of breaking thanks to the likes of Avenged Sevenfold,

Mastodon and Lamb of God. heavy metal seems as strong

as ever... and, thankfully. so does Hit

Parader.

Through changing times and shifting musical tastes we have proudly stayed the course, continually applying

our unique media pedal to the metal as only we can. Never shy to ruffle some feathers and shake up the hard rock world, after 500 issues

Hit Parader remains strong—the ultimate voice of heavy metal for millions of fans around the globe. As we've liked to say for so long... Hit Parader- still better than a front row seat at the hottest show in town!

So 500 issue done. We're ready for 500 more!

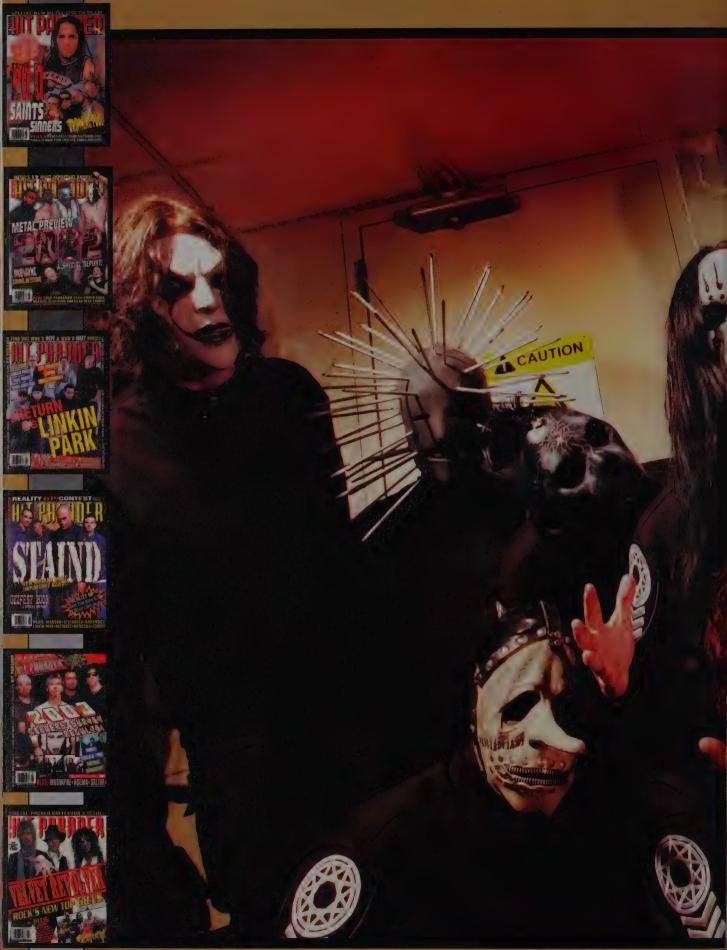


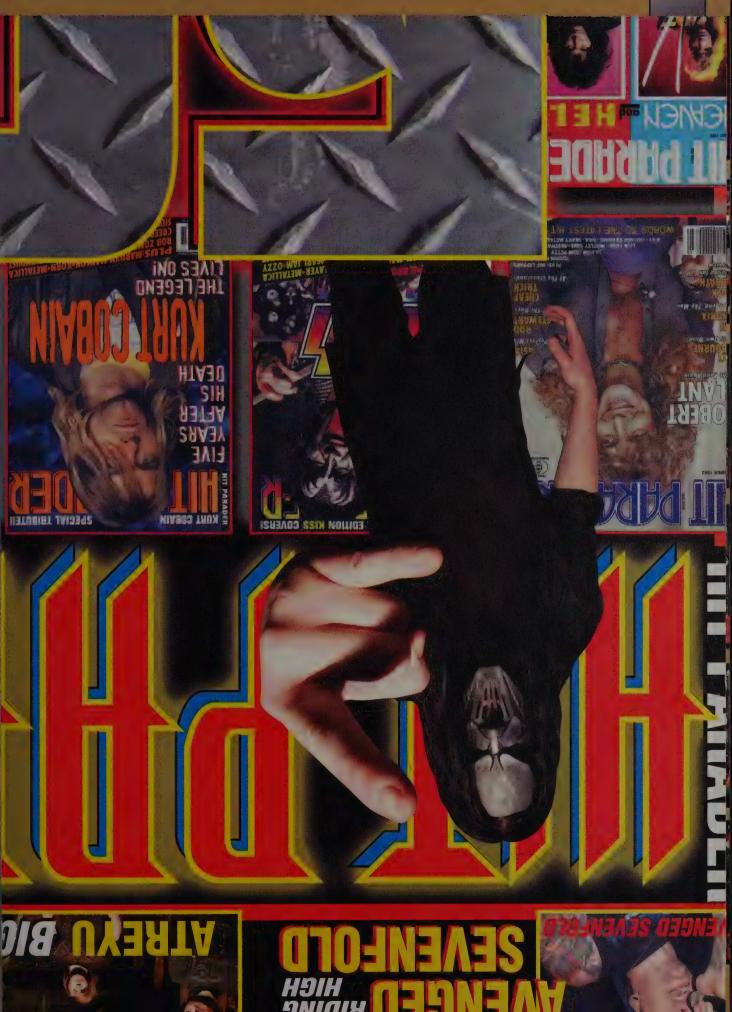
- Visiting Gene Simmons' palatial Los Angeles home—so that the Kiss bassist could better promote whatever he was trying to promote that week.
- •Interviewing Queen's Freddie Mercury and having him politely request that he have his mouth closed in any photos we run.
- •Watching Poison apply their heavy makeup before taking to the outdoor stage on a humid, 95 degree Dallas afternoon.
- Running into a surprisingly friendly Trent Reznor in the hallway of a Los Angeles recording studio.
- •Having Jon Bon Jovi single us out from the concert stage for "not getting into it" during a sold-out London show.
- Listening to Disturbed's David Draiman describe the inherent difficulties of shaving one's head.
- Watching Tracii Guns of L.A. Guns have two vampire tooth marks tattooed on his neck along the Sunset Strip.
- Having our photographer get sick at Eddie Van Halen's house during a shoot, and having then-wife Valerie Bertinelli bring her a cup of warm milk.
- Sitting by the Danube River in Budapest, interviewing both Michael and Rudolf Schenker—who said they hadn't been interviewed together in over ten years.
- Watching Metallica's late, great Cliff Burton uncomfortably respond to a photographer's request to "smile."
- •Having Axl Rose threaten to punch us out in the song Get Into The Ring. Bring it on, buddy!!
- Sitting backstage with Dimebag and Vinnie Paul and laughing our heads off over some of the dumbest jokes ever told.
- •Feeling the wrath of Don Dokken and George Lynch after putting them on the cover holding "dueling" water pistols.
- •Interviewing a young Slipknot in the "wilds" of Des Moines.
- •Meeting Kurt Cobain for the first-and-only time... and leaving with the foreboding sensation that the guy just wasn't enjoying his time as a rock star.
- •Encountering Stone Temple Pilots frontman Scott Weiland stretched out on dressing room couch, sun glasses in place... at midnight!
- Hearing Sabbath's Tony lommi light-heartedly explain his lingering fascination with Satanism.
- •Being impressed that Lita Ford was more attractive in person than in her highly-produced videos.
- Listening to a New York waiter try to decipher a lunch order placed by Motorhead's notorious Lemmy.
- Waiting for Thin Lizzy's Philip Lynott to call for an interview at 2PM... only to have him call right-on-the-button at 2AM!!
- •Watching the likes of Avenged Sevenfold, Mastodon and Wolfmother prove that there's still magic in hard 'n heavy rock and roll.

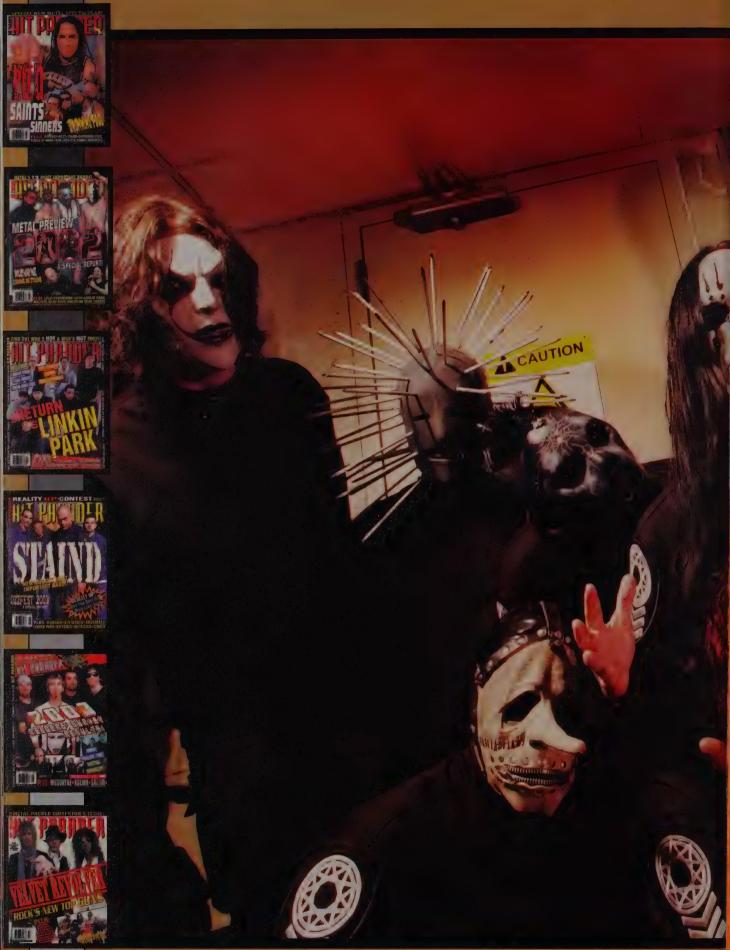














ALIGISEPT SOME





he last two years have represented one of the busiest— and most satisfying— periods in System of a Down's decade-long career. From the time they entered the recording studio in the fall of 2004 to complete work on their latest releases, **Mezmerize** and **Hypnotize**, right on through their headlining run at this summer's Ozzfest, it has been a veritable non-stop thrill ride for vocalist Seri Tankian, quitarist Daron Malakian, bassist Shavo Odadjian and drummer John Dolmayan. With their two companion discs (which were released some eight months apart in 2005) selling a combined total of over three million units, and the band having appeared in front of more than a million fans during their recent world-wide road treks, no follower of the contemporary music scene can deny that this Los Angeles-based alterna-metal unit has now

firmly ensconced themselves among 21st Century rock and roll royalty.

"I don't know how to respond to a concept like that," Malakian said. "It's such a cliche to say that we've never done this for the fame or money, but it's true. We don't mind any of that— we want to become as rich and famous as possible! But that's never been a main inspiration for us. When we started working on these albums, the focus was always on making great music. The idea of how well they might—or might not—sell never

even crossed our minds.

Quite obviously, it is SOAD's unmatched ability to focus on their artistic creations—rather than on the bright-'n-shiny distractions that so frequently accompany hard rock superstandom—that has most characterized their on-going run to the top. The undeniable fact is that this amazingly eclectic band has managed to continually prove their skills both in the studio and on the concert stage, at a time when far-too-many of their fellow rockers have shown themselves to be severely lacking in one of these areas... or both! As this unit continues to "wow" concert crowds at every stop along their tour trail, it is clearly their multi-faceted skills that serve to separate System from the vast majority of the heavy metal horde.

"We take a lot of pride in what we do," Malakian said. "That's true for every song we record and every show we perform. We treat making albums and playing live differently since one is about a degree of perfectionism, while the other is about instant expression. But they're each equally

important to us.

While listening to their albums has become a required musical supplement for millions of fans around the globe, witnessing System of a Down ply their rock and roll craft upon a concert stage has emerged as an equally unique experience. In some ways the group's live presentation is akin to being trapped in the eye of a hurricane, where a swirling vortex of seemingly unlimited power twists around you at a near-dizzying pace. In other ways, it is a feast for both the eyes and ears as this unit's highly visual and highly cerebral presentation enters the cranium through it's ear-blasting

ROB ANDREWS

power, then rattles around until its thought-provoking lyrical messages find a home in the brain's most delicate lobes. As they prove on a night in/night out basis, the SOAD crew clearly rank among heavy metal's crown jewels— a band that in thought, deed and action are as unique as their

"Every show is something special to us," Malakian said. "We treat the opportunity to reach thousands of people with our music as a true honor. I

can't remember this band ever not being totally focused when we go on stage.

The simple fact of the matter is that whether it's on the concert stage, or as shown throughout their latest pair of albums, few bands understand the inherent power of the rock form better than System of a Down. Mind you, we're not talking just about the sheer overwhelming volume that the style possesses— though there's plenty of that contained in the strident, often overwhelming metallic messages that this unit spews forth. Rather, we're referring to the power the form can also demonstrate through its words and lyrics.

Clearly System of a Down is not your "standard" hard rock act, if indeed such a creature still even exists in these highly unpredictable times. For this highly individualistic Armenian/American quartet, rock and roll— especially heavy, often vitriolic rock and roll— has become their primary voice of expression. And as this fearless foursome have continually shown through their various headline-grabbing actions, this is one band that refuses to view contemporary music as a mere collection of well-played notes and heart-felt words. SOAD see music as the ideal means for reaching the rock and roll masses with their politically-charged, emotionally-fueled heavy metal excursions.

'There is no question that our shared Armenian heritage, as well as our political views, are really important to this band," Tankian said. "But it's our musical vibe together that's really the most important thing. I think that comes across on the albums, but it's when we get on stage that things

really come together.'

The overwhelming success of System of a Down perhaps best reflects the current state of the American hard rock scene. With their heavy sound, strong political bent, as well as their ability to meld together many diverse artistic elements (ranging from metal, to jazz, to rap, to Middle Eastern melodies) within the fabric of their music, SOAD is as cutting-edge as any top-selling band can ever hope to be. Indeed, their attention-grabbing appearance and thought-provoking words have helped to redesign the musical perspectives of this entire hard rock generation. While the band members themselves may scoff at such a notion, preferring that focus be placed on their results rather than their supposedly "hip" trappings, they

can't deny the fast and furious impact their approach has had on the entire rock and roll scene.

"In our music we have the openness to go anywhere," Tankian said. "Our goal has always been to stay open to whatever currents guide us through our lives— musically, thematically, in every way just to be ourselves. Our songs and themes range from political, to social, to daily angst, to love and to hate. But those who believe that our agenda is just political miss the true point of this band. We want our music to touch upon every

sense of our audience—visual, auditory, taste and touch.

such a cliche to say that we've never his for the fame or money, but it's true



"With this being our second album, fans have a better idea of what to expect."

BY LEE TILLINGHAST

'ou'd think that by now Corey Taylor would practically be dropping in his rock and roll tracks. After all, the dude has been on a virtutracks. After all, the dude has been on a virtual non-stop musical merry-go-round for the last five years, dating all the way back to when his "main band", Slipknot, produced their sophomore album, lowa. After a two-year recording and touring cycle for that disc, Taylor almost immediately went into recording mode with his "other" band, Stone Sour, whose self-titled debut album sailed to platinum sales glory back in 2003 thanks to break-out his like Bother. hits like Bother.

Only months after his road responsibilities with the SS brigade ran their course in late '03, Taylor rejoined his masked Knot brethren for the lengthy studio process that resulted in their already-classic Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses. He then spent most of the next two years touring the world with the Nine Man Mutant Metal Army performing in front of crazed crowds from Topeka to Tokyo. And just as that band's incredibly hectic tour itinerary was reaching its conclusion late in 2005, the determined frontman announced his intentions to return to Stone Sour for

what's so cool about it, It's very different, but totally viable. We write very accessible songs— and that's what happens naturally when we write for Stone Sour. It comes out that way whether we plan it or

The infectious appeal of Stone Sour's sound seems to have an almost psychological impact on Taylor's artistic soul, freeing his spirit, and cleansing it of the "darkness" that fills so much of his Slipknot material. But the duality of his creative nature is still very much a part of the singer's being, and he knows full-well that after a year spent recording and the touring with his SS brethren, he will need to release his pent up hostilities and frustrations through the metallic meat grinder that is the Knot. But unlike the last time that he went through such a dramatic transi-tion (which led almost directly to industry-wide spec-ulation that Slipknot was on the verge of breaking up), this time around Taylor feels like he has a much better handle on the entire situation.

"I think I have a much better understanding of how each of these bands fits into my life," he said.

"The fact is that there is room for both of them—and for me, there is need for both of them."

There's no question that Taylor seems "happier" within his role in Stone Sour than he appears when leading Slipknot into action. That's not to say that he is any more

satisfied with one band than the other. Rather, it is clear that the more laid-back, happy-go-lucky atti-tudes presented by SS seem to perfectly suit Taylor's mood when he's away from the Knot camp. His con-tentment with Stone Sour is obvious every time he steps on stage where his rather unexpected ear-to-ear grins frequently confront those who crowd the area in front of the concert stage.

"I do smile a lot when I'm on stage with this band," he said. "It's just a lot more relaxed than it is with Slipknot— which is reflected in the basic nature of the music each band plays. I enjoy being in both bands, but there's a good-natured fun I have with Stone Sour that I can't find anywhere else.

Now, however, an interesting (albeit pleasant) dilemma confronts Taylor. Just as the expectations of Slipknot's audience began to drain much of that unit's creative energy prior to the recording of their most recent album, the success of Stone Sour's two discs has begun to place a similar burden upon Taylor and his cohorts. Can they continue to evolve as a band after fans have grown to expect the kind of easily accessible, yet hard-hitting material presented on each of the group's albums? As he begins to look ahead, it's a situation that Taylor has already begun to consider.

"To me there's only one consideration—and that's maintaining your musical integrity no matter what band you may be talking about," he said. "But at the same time, the fans mean everything to me, and making sure that they're happy is equally important. So what I've done to a great extent is turn inwards. I think that if a song— whether it's a Slipknot song or a Stone Sour song— is something that satisfies me, then it should extinfy the fance or well. That's not then it should satisfy the fans as well. That's not being arrogant, that's just being honest.

their sophomore album, **Come Whatever May**. Come to think of it, considering his filled-to-the-brim musical agenda, it's rather amazing that Mr. Taylor even finds the time to rest!

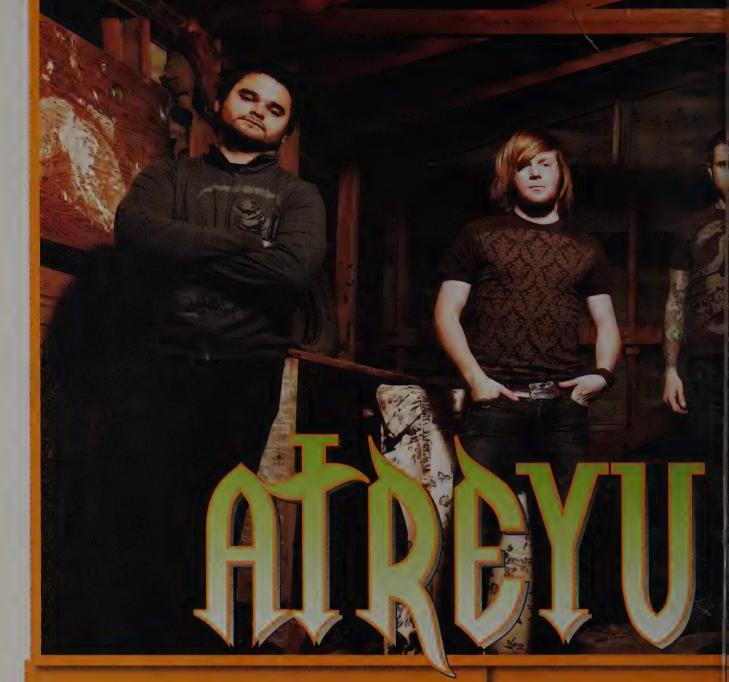
Sometimes all I want to do is sleep," he said with a grin. "It has been a really busy time for me, but I love it. Actually, I always make sure that no matter how ambitious my musical plans may get, I have as much time as possible for important things—like my son. Music has to take a secondary place to him. But, making music is such a big part of me that it never really seems like work. It's what I love to do."

Functioning in close accord with follow Knot-mate guitarist James Root, along with guitarist Josh Rand, bassist Shawn Economacki, and recently departed drummer Joel Ekman, (since replaced by Roy Mayorga), on Come Whatever May Taylor proves that the success of Stone Sour's debut disc was certainly no one-off affair. While this unit's surprisingly melodic metal musings are a far cry from the full-out frontal assault issued by Slipknot, throughout the new album Taylor shows that his trademark vocal power and dexterity is still as omnipotent as ever. On songs such as Through Glass and 30-30/150, this band roars ahead with an almost pervasive fury; but one that's tempered with a distinctly mid-western sensibility, and surpris-

The benefit of this being our second album is that the fans have a better idea of what to expect,"
Taylor said. "They know by now that this isn't going
to sound like Slipknot, and that it's not supposed to
sound like that. This is a very different band. If I
wanted to make music like Slipknot's I already have the best band in the world for doing exactly that. There's no point in doing that. Stone Sour comes from a very different place musically, and that's







range County's Atreyu are the band *everyone* loves to hate. While peers like Lamb Of God. Killswitch Engage, Shadows Fall and Mastodon are put on a pedestal, or should we say, a 'metalstal,' Atreyu are the bastard sons, the red-headed step children (and not just because bassist Marc McKnight has flaming red locks), the blackened sheep of the metal flock. Despite having similar sales and a comparable fanbase to the aforementioned bands, Atreyu-rounded out by screamer Alex Varkatzas, guitarists Travis Miguel and Dan Jacobs— and drummer Brandon Saller remain nobody's darlings. And frankly, they like it that way. Their third full length, A Death Grip On Yesterday, is selling off the shelves, and they nabbed one of the highly coveted fixed slots on Ozzfest 2006's side stage. Thanks to the huge, hooky choruses, and the noodly, shreddy guitar solos that are present on A Death Grip On Yesterday. Atrevu have taken the attention of hardcore kids and kept it hostage. Hit Parader spoke to drummer Brandon Saller about all things Atreyu.

Do you think you've silenced your critics with A Death Grip On Yesterday, which came out and sold over 60,000 records its first week in

We love doing this and if people like it, that's amazing. If they don't, they can have their opinions and that's fine. Letting our critics get to us would end up breaking us. We've always been "that band to hate." We're numb to it by now. At this point, I wake up and do what I love every day, and most of those people who

talk about us don't get to do that. When someone tears someone else down, it's because something is pathetic and screwed up inside of them, not us. When I was younger, people who were talking smack really bothered me, but now I think it's pathetic.

A lot of people consider Atreyu "the band you love to hate." What's the biggest misconception about you guys?
We're nice guys. We're not holier than thou.

We're just a young band. I'm 22. Our oldest

member is 26 years old. We're just a bunch of kids from OC. We don't have as much cred, yet. We're doing okay. We really are. We pride ourselves on that.

You're 22 years old, and you're getting married. How are you dealing with it?

My fiancée and I are not getting married until 2007 and I'll be 24 by that time, so we're waiting a little bit. We want to establish the band and have our heads together as much as we can. But we're happy and we know what want to do, so it's all good

You play drums, but do the melodic singing and much of the songwriting. It appears that Atreyu have gone even more melodic on A Death Grip On Yesterday. It's almost like a glammy metal album, with those huge '80s style choruses.

You know how you have those songs that get stuck in your head for hours? That's what we



"We love doing this and if people like it, that's amazing."

love to write. We wanted a real, big rock sound as well as have the record be brutally heavy, so we accomplished all that we wanted. It's very real, and not polished and machine like. That big rock sound came across, thanks to Josh Abraham, who produced it.[Guitarist] Dan [Jacobs] listened to cheesy '80s metal and we all grew up listening to rock music, and we all love stuff that caught our ears. Catchy music? Who doesn't like that? When we write a song, we approach it like this: Is this a song that we would want to listen to, if we didn't write it? And you know what? I am guilty of listening to our new record often. We're our biggest critics. If it doesn't catch our own ears, then it's not good. We always wanted to have those songs that stuck with you, and we think that all the songs on A Death Grip On Yesterday stick with you. Atreyu tried some extra bells and whistles

on **A Death Grip On Yesterday**. There are subtle, synthy "extras" on songs like We Stand Up. What was the impetus to try and play with new textures?

We definitely have some new stuff going on, with synth and strings. We wanted to do extra things, and the engineer we worked with, Ryan Williams, was great. We put things in the songs to heighten them, and make them brighter. We did a lot of stuff that you may not notice on the first listen, but if they weren't there, you'd definitely notice. It's the bells and whistles, the extra touch. For the most part, it was adding that little 'extra' something that was the difference, from our last album, The Curse to this record. We feel adding that stuff lifts the record up.

Is it hard to sing and play the drums? It's just so rare to have a vocalist who plays

Sometimes it's hard! Whenever I write a song, I record the singing part after I record the drums, without ever doing it together, and then I go to practice and realize that it's really difficult, especially when I am playing a hard beat and trying to sing at the same time! I've trained myself to not think about what I am doing. If I don't think about it, I'll

Can you offer a little insight into the lyrical content of A Death Grip Yesterday?

A lot of the songs, lyrically, are about growth, and dealing with life. A lot of the stuff Alex writes seems like it is about something specific but it's not. He leaves it open to interpretation. His lyrics can be positive or negative. Basically, you can hate your past and want to choke it out and you can have something in the past that you cannot let go of. It's about dealing with life and your past in general.



ALL IN THE FAMILY

BY RANDY SMITH

o question about it, it's been an amazing year for Korn. During that period they released **See You On The Other Side**— their first release for a new label— to rave reviews and chart-topping sales. They produced a video— *Twisted Transistor* that proved to be one of the most entertaining and ground-breaking efforts of the last decade. And they re-launched their legendary Family Values tour concept for the first time in five years. It's been a heady time for Jonathan Davis (vocals), James "Munky" Shaffer (guitar), Fieldy (bass) and David Silveria (drums), who managed to effectively put their controversial 2005 split with long time guitarist Brian "Head" Welch behind them and move on to once again conquer the rock and roll world.

"When things happen day-to-day, sometimes it doesn't seem like that much is going on," Davis said. "But when you consider what's occurred to us over a year-long period it's like our entire lives have changed. It's all been pretty dramatic, and at times very traumatic. And, the best part is that in the end all the 'drama' has proven to be very positive. It's made

us feel pretty good about ourselves and what we've accomplished."

Clearly the latest accomplishment on Korn's ever-active agenda is headlining the 2006 version of Family Values which hit the North American tour trail back in late summer and is continuing to rock on through the fall. With Korn sharing the "main stage" with the likes of Stone Sour and the Deftones, and the tour's "side stage" featuring an array of acts that cover a broad range of contemporary music styles, it is apparent that once again Korn has, made Family Values the "must see" event of the concert season. And, better yet, with ticket prices starting off at only \$9.99, the band has virtually guaranteed that not only should their FV road trek be seen by the metal masses... it will be seen by any and all who are interest-

"Giving something back to the fans is always something that's very important to us." Davis said. "That's why when we started planning this version of Family Values, we wanted to make sure that we had pricing that would allow everyone who wanted to attend the

chance of doing so. And by introducing a 'side stage' to this tour we've also given a lot of deserving young acts the chance to be seen and heard."

Once again— both on album and stage— this legendary Bakersfied, CA-spawned hard rock unit has delivered the rock and roll goods. But despite all that they've accomplished over the last 12 months, there are still fans who look at Korn in concert and see a band that is missing a key ingredient. Yes, even after recording a highly successful album and undertaking an historic tour, there are many Korn fans who insist the band is "incomplete" as a four-piece. All this begs the question; who, if anyone, will ever replace Head? We all know that the group has effectively utilized former Otep guitarist Rob Patterson to perform with them (in a somewhat strange, unseen, offstage capacity) throughout their recent road outings. But does this mean that Korn is once again ready to become a quin-

"We're in no rush to hire a permanent member," Davis said. "We didn't want to use samples when we're on stage because that's just not what this band is about. So we needed someone to help fill out the sound. But we're not ready to have anyone 'official' appear on

stage with us.

Such intriguing words from the often understated Mr. Davis. But this time around, with a new record deal, a new album and a new tour, it does indeed appear as if Korn also have created a new lease on rock and roll life for themselves. There's no question that towards the end of their previous record label run (though that company continues to make its presence felt through the release of the recent Live & Rare compilation), it seemed as if some of the energy that had always characterized the Korn musical ethic was being drained from the band's creative process.

"It's all been pretty dramatic, and at times very traumatic."

Their last disc, 2003's Take A Look In The Mirror, followed a diminishing sales pattern nitially established by such releases as 1999's Issues and 2001's Untouchables— all of which seemed dwarfed (at least in a commercial sense) when compared to the band's break-out mid-'90s releases, Korn, Life Is Peachy and Follow the Leader. Many felt that Davis' selfpossessed, and at times haunting lyrical magery was serving to further limit the band's cross-over appeal... though many of the group's long-time supporters believed that those said-same efforts stood at the very pinnacle of Korn's artistic output.

'If you want pretty musical pictures, I guess you'll have to listen to somebody else,' Davis said. "Our fans know what they're going to get from us, and it's very beneficial for everyone involved. It's very therapeutic for me to be able to get it all out of my system, and t's good for the fans to know that they're not he only ones who have problems in their lives. I never want my lyrics to be just sweet and innocent. What good is that to anyone? I want them to have some depth, and some power. When I sit down to write lyrics, I really have to get inside my head. I have to see what's rattling around up there before I can let any of it out.

With all that in mind, it is easy to understand why the immediate and overwhelming success of See You On The Other Side means so much to the members of Korn. It is a disc that reaffirms this band's role as both hit makers and style breakers— a band that's willing to continually venture far out on a limb in order to test the limits of the rock and roll form.

I'm very proud of everything on this album; the songs, the lyrics, the playing, and my vocals," Davis said. "I think we still understand the kids who are in our audience. We go out of our way to speak to them and listen to what they have to say. There's so much going on in their lives—things that even their parents can't fully understand. The lives of kids today are so complicated. Our music must speak to them. There's a passion in this music hat makes it all very tangible to those who hear it. It has the kind of substance that I want to hear in music. It gets into your system and just doesn't let go.

58 HIT PARADER





SCIARRETTO AMY

The name Jonny Santos should be rather recognizable to metal fans. That's because the Silent Civilian singer/quitarist cut his teeth in mid-'90s neo-metal band, Spineshank, Spineshank were relatively successful during their heyday, doing stints on Ozzfest and receiving a Grammy nomination. But that didn't stop Mr. Santos from quitting the band after the release of their third Roadrunner release, Self-Destructive Pattern.

"I wasn't happy. We weren't getting along as well as we should have been. I wasn't happy making the music we were making, and it's one of those things," Santos reveals with candor, laying his cards, face up on the table. "The band ran its course, and even though we got nominated for a Grammy, I still left on a high note, instead of watching the ship sink." Santos says that he isn't in close contact with his former bandmates, either, It's clear he's moved on.

years-old and I quit guitar to be the frontman for Spineshank. I wanted to get comfortable playing and singing. I got my head on right, and found a great group of guys, and we get along well, and they are all really talented musicians." Santos says he deliberately chose a group of unknowns for his new band because he wanted hungry.

Musically, Silent Civilian are light years apart from Spineshank, and Santos has happily returned to his roots. Rebirth Of The Temple is much more technical, much more thrash-oriented, and much faster than anything Spineshank ever did. But Santos says he will always be proud of his work in his former band.

Santos contends. "I knew I couldn't do Spineshank. Part II, because that is what everyone is expecting. I didn't want people to say, 'He never should have left Spineshank,' so I had to completely reinvent myself. I grew up on thrash, and my old bands before Spineshank were thrash bands. The first Spineshank demos were like old Sepultura, but things

> changed. With Silent Civilian, 1 made a thrash record, because that's what I wanted to do. We went in and kicked ass. Some of the songs are 6-anda-half minutes. and there's lots of guitar work and drum work. I made a musician's album, I think.' We at Hit

Parader are going to have to

agree with Santos on that assertion. Rebirth Of The Temple is an unexpected, solid surprise. If vou've written Santos off, take the time to write him back into your metal history book, because Silent Civilian will tickle your thrash metal fancy.



and is focusing on Silent Civilian and their balls-tothe-wall debut, Rebirth Of The Temple (MediaSkare)

"When I started the band, I took a year off, jamming to get my feet wet. I went back to playing guitar," Santos recalls, "I've played quitar since I was 7-

SILENT CIVILIAN FAST FACTS:

Check out Silent Civilian's MySpace page www.myspace.com/silentoivilian.

Rebirth Of The Tomple was produced by Logan Mader, who was once the guitarist In Machine Head. "He has found his calling as a producer and engineer," says Santos of Mader "He was patient with the band and super easy to work with



GOD FORBID

God Forbid are a North-east band, something that makes band practice somewhat of a test of will, patience, and strength.

"It has certainly grown into a more complex situation than before, but it seems to work," says guitarist Doc Coyle, not lamenting the band's tri-state status. "[Guitarist] Dallas [Coyle] isn't in Florida anymore. He is actually homeless, and sleeps on friend's couches. He will hate me when he reads this, but think about what it feels for me, to have a brother that is a professional burn. Okay, I'm just kidding. [Singer] Byron [Davis] lives about 5 minutes from me the next town over in New Jersey, and we rehearse at [bassist] John's [Outcalt] house,

where [drummer] Corey [Pierce] also lives, in Pennsylvania. We tour so much now, that there isn't a whole lot of rehearse time, so as long as everyone shows up for tour, it works.'

God Forbid, who stand out from the crowded metal pack due to the fact that four fifth of the band are black, spend much of their time on the road, promoting their latest album, **IV**: **The Constitution Of Treason** (Century Media). The album accidentally stumbled into becoming a concept album. "The album was not originally a concept album, but as lyrics were being written, a dark and apocalyptic vibe seem to really resonate from the material," Coyle reveals. "It wasn't until the record was near completion, and the songs had been arranged in their proper order, that I thought I should write a story to the lyrics. It just seemed to make

GOD FORBID FAST FACTS:

Every member of God Forbid has worked for the same New Jersey based landscaping company, called Picture Perfect. "It was the first job I ever had, and it made sense to do because it was flexible," says Coyle. "There was a very low point in our band when Dallas, Byron, Corey, and I were all working there at the same time. Only Dallas and Byron had cars, and Byron used to hate picking people up, so he'd show up late and everyone was just miserable.

When asked why lots of pop culture outlets - magazines, songs, websites - like to dis Coyle's home state of New Jersey, Coyle responds, saying, "Everyone disses NJ because the most they've ever seen of it is the damn Turnpike, where you have a nice view of a few ozone layer disintegrating factories emitting toxic fumes into the air. Not to mention the fragrant sewage smell that comes from New York sending all its waste here. I don't care if people don't like Jersey. It's still the most densely populated state in the country as well as the wealthiest. Obviously, somebody must like it." Coyle also says he enjoys the state's diversity, claiming. "I feel comfortable here, and I like the diversity and there is access to everything I need.

> sense because the album was so epic already. Here's the story summarized: A nuclear holocaust takes place and ravages most of the world. In the wake of this destruction, the survivors reform society as they see fit, which ends up being very religiously oppressive. A leader emerges and forms a rebellion against this injustice. Civil war erupts, and this man is killed when victory is almost near. Times passes and society eventually returns to an even worse political and military state than it was before the nuclear war. It's mainly a story about mankind's unwillingness to fully evolve into a species that wishes to preserve itself instead of being deadset on self-destruction. I'm very opinionated when it comes to topics of this nature. I could really go on all day, but I won't.'

Still with us? We think so. The concept that Coyle described is defi-





The Dead, their most critically praised effort

an even cooler night job (singing in a heavy metal band)!

nitely a current, relevant topic in today's post-September 11 age. This concept is set to shreddy guitar, high-tech guitar work, and the intimidating,

almost militaristic barks of Davis. The brothers Coyle contribute clean vocal melodies on IV: The Constitution Of Treason, which has a very classic, European metal vibe to it. But ultimately, the album is thinking man's metal, with brawny riffs and a brainy concept, and that's another thing that keeps God Forbid one step ahead of other bands in the overcrowded metal scene.

WALLS OF JERICHO

Cute yet tough women in metal are few and far between. Let's face it. Heavy metal attracts more dudes than chicks. It's a fact of life, one that most of us accept. But every once in a while, a strong, ferocious woman rears her head and makes an impact. Walls Of Jericho frontwoman Candace Kucsulain is one of those women. She is inadvertently out to break down the walls for her gender in a male-dominated genre of music, whether she likes it or not.

"I've got to be honest," Kucsulain says. "I don't want to take credit for anything. Any girl who is willing to stand up and be counted, and get into the metal scene, that's great. I didn't get into the music because of any girls who inspired me. I did it because I was passionate about this music."

While Kucsulain isn't waving the flag for chicks in metal, you can't deny that this petite firecracker does inspire curiosity and interest, thanks to the way she barks like a beast over fast, moshable riffs on her band's newest

album, With Devils Amongst Us All (Trustkill). "There is absolute emotion in this, 100%," Kucsulain says, beaming with pride about her band's latest offering. "It's hard, but it's emotional in a good way. What you see is what you get with us."

*Kucsulain is an experienced body piercer. Talk about a cool day job (piercing) and

On With Devils Amongst Us All, Walls Of Jericho, who take their name from the Helloween album of the same name, employed a producer for the first time. Despite having released three previous albums, the Michigan-based band never enlisted the help of a producer. But they wanted to step it up on With Devils Amongst Us All, and that required the guiding hand of a producer. The band selected former Switched frontman Ben Schigel, who has produced albums by Chimaria and Misery Signals, to name a few, to man the boards. And it was a pleasant experience for them.

man the boards. And it was a pleasant experience for them.

"In metal right now, you gotta step up," Kucsulain says. "We've done several records so far, and we need to be on top of our game for this new album. We didn't want to write the same thing over and over again, and we want to have our own sound. We are growing as musicians and as people, and Ben was like an extra hand for us. He didn't try and change our sound. He just offered his advice on how to make our songs better."

He just offered his advice on how to make our songs better."
On With Devils Amongst Us All, songs like A Trigger Full Of Promises are Walls Of Jericho at their best and at their tightest. Walls Of Jericho address an assortment of social issues on the album, ranging from rape to love lost. On The Haunted, Kucsulain addresses the often-difficult subject of rape, a topic she has broached in the past. "It holds a lot of meaning to me, for anyone who has ever dealt with it," she says, referring to why she has



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returned to the subject more than once. "And it's weird, because the song itself is so ridiculously catchy. I've learned, though, that if you want people to listen to the message, you have to sugarcoat the package. If that's one super catchy part you can't get out of your head because it's so catchy, I am stoked, because it's saying something and people will remember it and connect with it."

Thankfully, there are plenty of parts on With Devils Amongst Us All that hardcore fans will connect with.

WICKED WISDOM

"I've always been into this kind of music," says Wicked Wisdom frontwman and actress Jada Pinkett-Smith. "Like most bands, when we first got together, we went through different sonic transitions. At first, we had an R&B, rock and pop fusion thing going on, and it didn't work for us. We went to Europe, and we started playing with different ideas with a heavier feel, and that's how we always wanted to go."

While many loyal *Hit Parader* readers might be raising their eyebrows at the fact that the pint-sized Miss Pinkett (who is also Mrs. Will Smith) is into heavy metal and that she is performing it. But seeing is believing, as Miss Pinkett spent her summer of 2005 on tour with Ozzfest, and she watched every single band that she shared the side stage with. Chances are, if you were looking for Jada Pinkett backstage, you'd find her rocking out to Mastodon and Killswitch Engage. This little lady puts her money where her mouth is.

"It's music I've always listened to," she reveals about metal. "You'd be surprised how many black folks are into this music, but don't feel invited to the concerts, and that's one of the reasons I felt it was important to participate in Ozzfest. Perception is not truth. People might perceive that I would not appreciate this genre, but I was introduced to this at the same

time as Prince and Chaka Khan and Ozzy and Led Zeppelin. I want to break down the idea that music has color lines."

sick when traveling. I have to have my books, and my black sweats. I bring a

"Guitarist Pocket, who has been a professional musician since he was 13, and

bunch of black Russell sweatsuits," she says about her tour essentials

lada are the only original members of Wicked Wisdom.

On Wicked Wisdom's groovy, semi-funky, totally aggro, eponymous debut, Pinkett proves she is a small person with a huge voice. "I have been doing it for 5 years now," she says. "I have always wanted to generate power. No one will do what Freddie Mercury did with his voice. No one can achieve the same tones he had. I have had vocal coaches and I work on it every day...every day! I am getting the power I want, and am working on my tones. It's like sculpting your body!"

Wicked Wisdom features an impressive cast of musicians, including drummer Fish of Fishbone fame. "He knew my lead guitarist, Pocket, really well, and he came to one of our shows, and said, 'Jada, you need me now," Pinkett reveals about Fish's recruitment into her band.

In 2006, the singer has dedicated herself to her band, choosing to move her acting career to the back burner in favor of the rock. "That will always be a part of my get down," she laughs. "I can't give up my day job yet. I do it when the roles come around. In Hollywood, there are not a lot of great female roles, so I have time for my music. It keeps me busy, because if I am not busy, I get in trouble."

As for her famous, big box office husband, who is also one of the most successful pop rappers of our time, Pinkett-Smith says he enjoys the hard rock. "He appreciates this genre because it allows you to expand and grow," she reveals. When asked if Pinkett-Smith would ever collaborate with her husband on hard rock project, she says, "I don't know! Even though he has a love and appreciation, it's a different expression than his get down."



"THE SONIC EQUIVALENT OF COMING UNDER ENEMY FIRE."

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hey've been halled as the best young "pure" metal band to emerge from Britain this decade. They've been favorably compared to everyone from Metallica to Machine Head to from Maiden. They've been cited as one of the few "modern metal" bands capable of blending 21st Century hard rock ideals with classic metal concepts. Yup, Bullet For My Valentine have certainly received their share of critical kidos during their brief time in the spotlight. But vocalist/guitarist Matt Tuck, guitarist Michael Padget, bassist Jason James and drummer Michael Thomas have taken their rather sudden ascension into the hard rock hierarchy rather well. As their debut disc.

The Poison, continues to ride the lightning atop the Euro-metal charts, and follows a slow-yet-steady growth pattern on this side of the Atlantic (aided by their recent shift to a larger label), these Wales-based rockers know that they still have a lot of work to do batter they can begin to properly live up to all the praise that has been heaped upon them. Recently we spoke to Tuck about what it's going take to make BFMV one of the biggest metal bands on Earth.

Hit Parader: Things have broken so quickly for the band. Were you prepared to become one of the biggest Continental Metal acts of the last 10 years?

Mick Tuck: Is anyone ever really prepared for something like that? It was amazing for us, and something that we truly appreciate. But it was a little overwhelming at times. I mean one day you're a young band struggling to get your first album done, and the next you're on the cover of some of the biggest European music magazines. It does change your life.

HP: And then when you came to America it was back to Square One— opening shows, riding around on a small bus, struggling for recognition.

MT: That was fine with us. We knew that when we came to America it wasn't going to be easy. The kind of music we play is a little more

we're a contemporary metal band that has brought in a lot of what we love about more modern hard rock into our sound.

HP: Tell us a little about the band's history.

MT: We come from a place called Bridgeend, Wales. It's a little out-of-the-way, but it's a great place to start a band. The entirety of the United Kingdom is fairly small— at least in comparison to America— so a young band can get from where they live to a place like London without too much difficulty. Michael, Padge and I started our first band, called Jeff Killed John, back when we were kids in the mid-'90s. It wasn't a particularly creative group, but it allowed us to play loud, aggressive music and learn a lot about what a band is supposed to do. Then we added Jason a few years ago, and that's when things began to really take shape for us. We started balancing our style with a bit more melody, and as our playing improved so did our song writing. We changed our name

STRAIGHT SHOOTERS BUILLIFOR MY VALENTINE

BY RICHARD QUINN

accepted in Europe at the moment than it is in the States. You're a bit more trendy than we are when it comes to musical loyalty. Europe tends to be a little more traditional when it comes to its rock and roll tastes. So when we had the chance to play third on the bill for the Rob Zombie tour, we jumped at it. We wanted the chance to introduce ourselves to America, and that was a great way of doing it.

HP: And how did you find the reception in America?

MT: It was a little rough at times. A lot of fans may not have been that familiar with us or our music, so we got a mixed response in some markets. New York was particularly tough on us, but we had been warned about that. It's a little like London in that regard—they see so much, and because of that they enjoy putting you through your paces. Some smaller markets are just happy to have a band come through their town and perform. Other places rather expect that, and are very critical, but we can handle ourselves, and thankfully, most of the time when we left the stage, we were getting a very warm response.

HP: Now you're headlining your own State-side tour. How has that been going?

MT: It's nice because the people who come to those shows are obviously very attuned to us and what we're doing. We can just go out there and do what we do best. We don't feel the need to try and win them over every night.

HP: You've been compared to so many great bands of the past and present— everyone from Metallica to Guns N' Roses to Motorhead. How does that make you feel?

MT: It makes us feel great! But at the same time we want to make sure that fans realize that we're using those influences as our starting point. We're not trying to copy those bands or play music that represents some bygone era. We're very proud to be a metal band, but

to Bullet For My Valentine, and at the second show we ever played under that name, we got signed.

HP: You're touring behind your debut disc, The Poison, which has actually been out for quite a while in Europe. When do you imagine you'll begin work on your next disc?

MT: We're ready to go. We write all the time. I sit in the back of the tour bus with my guitar and I write songs while we're on the road. We could go in today and make another album. But right now our job is to focus on going on stage every night and playing the songs that are on this album. We're really enjoying that.

HP: Something interesting happened with your American label soon after **The Poison** was released. Tell us about that.

MT: Well, it actually had more to do with the album itself than with the label. The disc was originally released in America on an indie label, Trustkill. But they have an association with Jive Records, which is a major label. Jive waits to see how certain albums perform before they agree to pick them up and distribute them. So we sold the first 50,000 units of **The Poison** while we were on Trustkill, and then Jive picked it up from there. They have much bigger promotional budgets, and their distribution network is very strong, so it was a very good situation for us.

HP: One last things... how do you view the current state of heavy metal?

MT: We actually have enough to occupy our time just worrying about ourselves. So considering the entire state of metal is rather intimidating. I hear a lot of good music out there, but I also hear a lot of garbage. But I imagine that's the way it's always been. All we can hope is that the cream will rise to the top and that there'll be a lot of fans there ready to appreciate it when it does.

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE

" We knew that when we came to America it wasn't going to be easy."



here was a period back during the middle of summer when it seemed as if everyone, everywhere was talking about Wolfmother. Executives at record labels... top radio d.j.'s... fans in the street— they all seemed mesmerized by the fuzz-propelled metal magic projected by this Australian power trio. And there was good reason for such a reaction to the music created by vocalist/guitarist Andrew Stockdale, bassist/ keyboardist Chris Ross and drummer Myles Heskett. With their penchant for free-form jams, riff-heavy head trips and spacy instrumental excur-sions, on their self-titled debut disc Wolfmother appeared intent on bringing the time-tested vibe of classic "stoner" rock roaring into the 21st Century. Album tracks like Dimension and Woman roared like the proverbial bat out of hell, others such as White Unicorn and Apple Tree, showcased this unit's vivid imagination as well as their diverse instrumental skills. Recently we thought it was the right time to hook up with the frizzy-haired Mr. Stockdale and get the inside scoop on Wolfmother's hippie, trippy rock and roll ride.

> Hit Parader: Why does a young band like Wolfmother draw so heavily on a hard rock style that was popular before any of you were even born?

Andrew Stockdale: I think that might be a bit of an oversimplification of what we do because this is very much music intended to be listened to by today's rock and roll audience. But we certainly do have our influences from the '60s and '70s, and much of that is because we view that period as a very expressive, exciting time in rock history. I think that was particularly true of the British rock of that period. Bands were experimenting, and coming up with new ideas and new sounds. I guess in some ways, that's what we're trying to do. HP: So you're trying to create something new by recycling something old?

AS: (Laughing) That's a rather interesting way of putting it, but I guess that's true. Everyone needs their point of reference, and that particular period in music history is ours. But I want to believe that it is our starting point rather than our ending point. We've taken our influences and brought our own style to them. For whatever reason a lot of people believe that every band must somehow emerge as something totally unique and different. I don't know if I believe that; we're all extensions of the same musical family tree. We have the same roots and the same influences. It's all just a matter of where you take all of it and what you make of it.

HP: How did Wolfmother come together? AS: You see us now, and everyone thinks of us as a new band with a debut album out. But the fact is that we've been around for the last seven years. We met when we were all in college in Sydney, and we'd get

BY RAY MORGAN



wasn't anything very formal or very focused— just three friends getting together to have some fun. Our backgrounds all had to do with things other than music.

Before getting into this band, I was a photographer, while Myles worked in graphics and Chris worked in the digital world. So we all brought some of that into this music. It naturally led us down a path less traveled. When we started to jam together, sometimes we'd just play the same song for hours, working on the riff and just getting into the total vibe. That's what it was about for us for a long time. It wasn't until maybe 2003 that we started to think about doing this as a career.

HP: What convinced you that you should

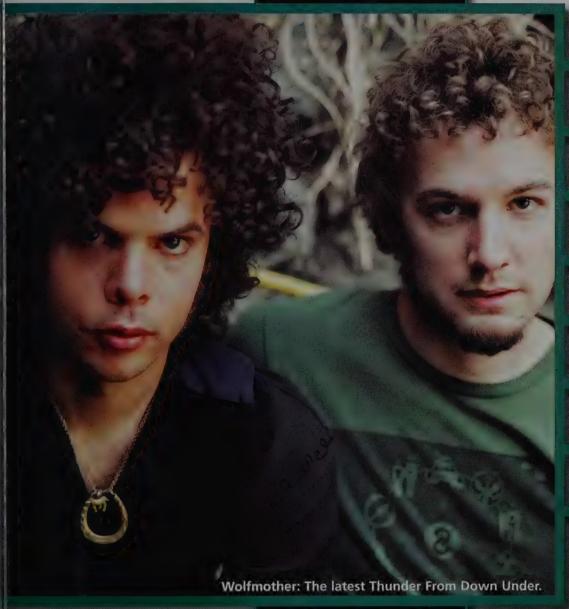
take the band to the next logical step?

AS: I put together a demo tape of some of the songs I had been working on. Nobody familiar with our album would recognize it. because it was a totally acoustic collection that I basically did for my own pleasure. The other guys in the band didn't know about it, and they didn't even hear any of it until it was totally completed. I didn't know how they might react to it because it was so completely different from what we were doing in our jam sessions. But, much to my surprise they really liked the songs, and

to have a name when you go on stage! At that time Chris was reading a book in which the term "wolfmother" had been used. For some reason it stuck with him, and he brought it up with us. To be honest, at first we hated it because it sounded a little too "metal" for us. But when we played our first live show, we were stuck for a name, so Chris again suggested Wolfmother, and we went with it. People seemed to like it, so we basics, and give them a good song, a good riff and a good melody, they'll give you an honest shot.

HP: After you signed your record deal you went to LA to record your album. Why?

AS: It seemed like the good thing to do. But it did present some problems for us. When we first went to L.A. we really didn't know where to go or what to do. Someone we knew recommended Cherokee Studios to us, saying that it was the place that Pink Floyd had recorded much of The Wall. That was good enough for us, but what they did-



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that was what got us going in a more professional direction. Of course, the songs quickly transformed once the three of us got our hands on them.

HP: Let's talk about the band's name. Where did that come from?

AS: It's kind of a funny story, because for a long while after we got together as a band we didn't know what to call ourselves. It

I imagine, because we gave them what they wanted. When Australian fans sense that your ego right away. But if you stick to the

n't tell us was that the place really hadn't been active in recent years, and that most of the equipment was gone. But it gave us a place to work, and that was very important for us. That's where a lot of the material for this album came to life. Now it's time to unleash what we've done on the world and get on the road. We can't wait to experience what happens next!

PLAYING DIRTY

BY ROB ANDREWS

radie of Filth's frontman. Dani Filth, has begun to reconlize the first that his districtly European shock-rock unit may never make in ajor impression on this side of the Atlantic. That's a notion at deasy first particularly well with this surprisingly erudite Brit, who still believes in his heart and soul that with the appearance of the group's latest release, Thornography. State-side success is inerely the next release, Thornography. State-side success is inerely the next leave, or the next media linealthrough away. But the harsh light of reality has begun to shine down upon Filth and his crew—Paul Allender (guitar), a nes McKillboy (guitar), Dave Publis (bass), Martin Foul (Keyboards) and Adrian Erlandsson (drums)—and when he plants to think about it, he's not all-that dissatisfied with his unusual unit's lot in rock and roll life.

"We are what we are, and I'm quite pleased with that,"
Dani said. "I would have thought the by now we would have begun to make more of an impact in America, but there is still time—and when there is time to be always hope. I honestly believe that if we're given a proper chance with this album we can begin to make the inroads that we've always wanted."

Whether or not they ever succeed in making a major sonic impact on the American metal landscape, there's no avoiding the thought that perhaps Cradle of Filth should be more successful than they are. With their penchant for creating complex, disturbing, and exceedingly well-played metal opuses, and their ability to present a theatrically-charged artistic presentation, one might imagine that COF would be the perfect band for those weaned on the more blatant shock-rock trappings of Slipknot and Mudvayne. But for whatever reason, despite more than 15 years of trial-and-error musical

progress, that kind of metallic epiple, has yet to occur for Dani and his lads. Now, however, with Thornography, COF are determined to prove that it still might!

determined to prove that it still might!

"The success of bands like Slipknot really have little direct bearing on us," he said. "But at the same time it does show that there is a sizable audience that's willing to explore the outer edges of the metal periphery. What we're doing is far from mainstream—indeed, about as far as you can get! But on this album we've introduced elements that should aid our efforts to reach a wider audience... without sacrificing our principles."

One of the steps towards more mainstream acceptance that Cradle of Filth has taken on their new disc was inviting in the likes of HIM's Ville Valo to perform on a number of tracks. Valo's contributions of *The Byronic Man* add an unmistakable flair to the proceedings—marking the song as something different from anything COF have done before. Throw in the spoken-word narration (done by actor Doug Bradley of *Hellraiser* fame), and there's no doubt that the Filth gang has gone that extra step in order to expand their musical base.

"Ville did some amazing work on the album," Dani said. "But so did all of our invited guests. We even brought in a choir to add some ethereal gloss to the proceedings."

There's no denying that despite their on-going struggles to break through in the North American market, the formula used by Cradle of Filth throughout their career has already paid some major dividends. Indeed, this unit ranks among the biggest heavy metal bands in the world—though many of you reading this probably don't even own one of the band's discs. Fact is, while they may lack the instant household recognition of a Korn or Slipknot on this side of the Big Pond, over in Europe, Cradle of Filth is clearly more than just another shock rock contingent—they're a true legendary force.



"It is time for other people to headline Ozzfest."

to anyone listening that he would "never" headline Ozzfest again. He had just completed a grueling stage run with the once again reunited Black Sabbath, and at tour's end. Ozzy was feeling every one of his 57 hard-lived years. It wasn't that the legendary rocker didn't want to continue closing the show at the metal fest that bear his name. It was more a question of whether after 35 tough years in the rock and roll meat grinder he could still deliver the metallic goods on a night-in/night-out basis. He — along with his brilliant wife/manager. Sharon — feit that perhaps it was time to let a younger, more aggressive generation of performers begin to grab their fair share of the Ozzfest spotlight.

mino. They decided to dust off Ozzy's solo career and make him this year's Fest headliner for 10 select shows. half of the total performances this summer-long metal extravaganza will stage in '06. That decision was certainly enough to generate headlines from Topeka to Tokyo. Indeed, with Ozzy stepping on stage as a solo performer for the first time in four years.—and presenting a selection of songs from his upcoming solo album in addition to his array of time-tested classics.—it would clearly appear that Ozzfest 2006 has successfully pulled a rabbit (or at least an Osbourne) out of its proverbial hat.

"It is time for other people to headline Ozzfest." Osbowine said. "But I am very happy to have the chance to perform at this year's shows. I haven't done it as a solo artist in a number of years, so it's sumething tesh and different for the taus. probably never dreamed possible. So as interest in his next solo disc (his first in nearly five years) begins to build, it's easy to understand why many within the metal kingdom view his recent *Ozzfest* exploits with particular interest.

"I can't talk too much about the new Ozzy album, because they told me not to," joked guitarist Zakk Wydle, who pulled double duty at this year's Fest, working with Ozzy's solo band as well as leading his own unit, Black Label Society into action. "All I can say is that it sounds great to me. It's classic Ozzy."

What more could any heavy metal fan want than a fresh dose of Ozzy's patented guitar-driven rock? But perhaps none of us should hold our breath waiting for this new album to arrive... simply because when they're sequestered in the recording studio sometimes things can drag on a bit longer than they may want for the Ozz and his

musical cohorts
. But that's
nothing particularly new— it's
always taken
Ozzy a lot of
blood, sweat,
tears and time
in order to get

his solo albums to sound just the way he wants them to.

"Making a new album has always been hard work for me," he said. "It doesn't come easy. I'm always very aware of the legacy of music that I've been involved with, and I never would want to release anything that doesn't live up to what everyone's expecta-

tions might be."

These days, it perhaps takes a bit more than it previously did to get Osbourne primed and ready for rock and roll action. But considering the fact that he has lived life for the last decade clean and sober- in stark contrast to a vast majority of his earlier rock and roll existence— acting smart and thinking fast has become almost second nature to this crazy-like-a-fox rocker. So it would seem safe to say that at some point in the near future— as soon as he completes his latest Ozzfest run- Osbourne will again make his album presence felt in the rock and roll world. After all, he's done it before, and he'll do it again... he is, and will always be the one-and-only Ozz!

"My life is never sensible, it's always crazy," Ozzy said. "Whatever I do is work, and often it happens so fast and furious that I don't even know whether or not I'm looking forward to it all. But the saving grace is that I'd rather have work than nothing to anticipate. But I don't feel that I'm trying to compete with younger bands, or even with myself. I'm just trying to make the best music I can and do whatever is necessary to

keep me from going crazy."



But somewhere between the end of this 2005 Ozzfest and the launch of this year's event, semething strange, and somewhat disturbing, happened. As hard as they looked, Sharon and Ozzy simply couldn't find anyone or anything that equaled Osbourne (whether as a solo performer or as a member of Sabbath) as an on-stage attraction. Let's face, the metal form hasn't exactly been popping out chart-topping superstars in recent years and with proven veterans such as Judas Priest, Slayer. Slipknot and Iron Maiden either currently on hiatus or having recently served as Fest co-headliners, the search for the Star Attraction for Ozzfest 2006 quickly began to run out of steam. Oh sure, chosen bands like System of a Down and Disturbed are certainly news worthy, but Ozzy and Sharon were the first to realize that a headlining lineup of SOAD, Disturbed and Hatebreed didn't reality stand up when compared to, say, the 2004 Fest lineup that featured the stellar falents of Sabbath, Priest and Slayer.

So what did the ever-clever Osbourne: decide to do? Well, despite Ozzy's recent well-publicized protestations about him mo longer wanting to headline the event, they made the goly "fogical" decision that same In

the entire metal world has been on his world with Black Sabbath — continuing right on through this spring when the band was mally inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. There had been so much speculation about a possible new Sabbath album— their first together since Ozzy first left that band back in 1979 — but that apparently will not happen, at least not at any time in the foreseeable future. Let's not lorget for one second, however, that sandwiched between Ozzy's two historic stints with Sabbath was a highly successful solo career— one during which the inimitable Ozz sold more than 30 million albums and performed in front of millions of fams world-wide

In many ways Osbourne's solo career, curing which he's recorded such memorable discs as Blizzard Of Ozz, Bark At The Moon and Ozzmosis, has far surpassed his achievements with Sabbath— in both a sommercial and artistic sense. While the Sabbath songbook remains the seminal foundation upon which the entire heavy metal empire has been constructed, the underiable fact remains that Ozzy's solo work helped expand the boundaries of the hard rock world in ways that Sabbath hail



ometimes it's not easy knowing that the eyes of the entire heavy metal world are upon you. Many-a-band (including some that have long existed at the very pinnacle of hard rock acclaim) have wilted away under the intimidating pressure created by such lofty expectations. Just don't expect Mastodon to suffer such an ignorminous late. With the release of their major label debut. Blood Mountain, and their headline-stealing run at this summer's Unholy Alliance road trek (which also featured Slayer and Lamb of God), this Atlanta-based progressive-metal unit ms printed and ready to take their rightful place in the 21st Century hard rock hierarchy. Following in the powerful wake of their 2004 breakout disc, Leviathan, this time around guitarist Bill Keliher, drummer Brann Dailor, bassist/vocalist Troy Saunders and guitarist/vocalist Brent Hinds have putel

Hit Parader: People are already taking about Blood Mountain as the metal album of the year. How does that make you feel?

a secontry found out from the over-informative Divide, with the highly cerebral and tristantly bruth **Divid Mountain**. Mastocon man fuve surpossed the skylling respectations of everyone... including themselves!

Brann Dailor: I guess I'd have to be pretty foolish to say that it didn't make me feel very happy, wouldn't I? The album has just come out, so we're just beginning to get a lot of feedback on it from the fans. Some of them heard a few of the songs when we played them live during the summer. But it's a different experience to have the entire album and play it at home or in your car. That's when you can really relate to it. There's so much going on with this album that you need to listen to it a few times before you can begin to fully grasp everything. But so far, the response from everyone has been very positive.

HP: How do you feel about the album?

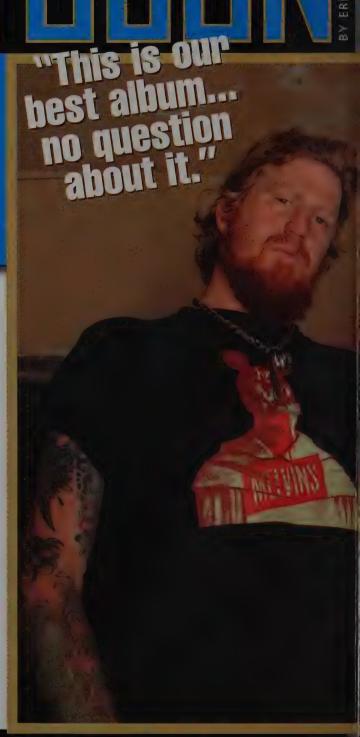
BD: It's so expected for someone in a band to say that the new album is the best thing that they've ever done. I'd imagine that just about every band in history has said that at one time or another... and they probably meant it with their heart and soul when they did say it. Well, I guess I'm no different! (Laughs) This is our best album... no question about it. I don't know if I can explain why at this moment because I've been living with this music on a daily basis for months. But it's just so heavy, and so interesting, that I can't help but really dig it.

HP: When you hear people say that Mastodon is the best hope to "save" the metal world, does that place too much pressure on you?

BD: It's a lot of pressure only if you look at it that way. For us, making music is what we do. We don't really spend much time thinking about saving the world or anything like that. We're just a good, heavy rock and roll band that's trying to make the best music they can. It's up to everyone else to interpret things the way they want. But what I hope we can be part of is making this kind of music important again. That would be cool. We've gone through this long period when you've had all this simple pop music that everyone has been listening to. But you've had some great rock albums come out over the last few months, and if we can help get people to listen to heavy, technical, progressive music again, then that would be a great accomplishment.

HP: Do you have a favorite song on Blood Mountain?

BD: Man, that's so hard. It's like asking a parent to choose their favorite kid. Let's see... *Hunters of the Sky* is really cool. So is *The Sleeping Giant* and *The Siberian Divide*. And I don't want to forget *Bladecatcher* or *Circle of Cysquatch*. Oh, it's impossible to pick just one; they're *all* my favorite! They work together



NO BLOOD, NO FOUL

to tell the story of Blood Mountain.

HP: Your last album, Leviathan, was something of a concept album. Is that true for Blood Mountain as

BD: Yeah, it is. In one way, it's kind of like what we've gone through... shedding a mountain of blood in order to get where we want to in terms of our music. But in another sense, Blood Mountain is something of a metaphor for striving for something special. It's about what can happen when you attempt to climb a mountain and get stranded. You

BD: Well, since the album is out, I guess that isn't a from Mars Volta— (keybordist) Ikey Owens and (singer) Cedric Zavala— were on *The Siberian Divide*. It was great to have some new faces in the

amazing experiences, but being part of something new may have been the ultimate rock and roll experience for us. There was such a great sense of camaraderie among the bands— a real sense that we were all in this together. And that goes for the other bands as well- Children of Bodom and Thine Eyes Bleed. Everyone brought something special to the tour, and we can't thank Slayer enough for inviting us to participate.

HP: But that's just the start of your touring plans,



go through hell, with hallucinations and actual dangers surrounding you. There's an amazing story that's involved with this album, but it's almost impossible for me to explain without everyone hearing the album first. Let's just say that our main char-

Last year we played *Ozzfest*, and this year we were able to play *The Unholy Alliance*. They were both

BD: We are a touring band. Now that the album is finished and out there, that's where all our focus is going to be. We're just gonna be touring around and around in circles, where ever we can play, until everyone just gets totally fed up with us.



y now almost everyone aware of the eclectic hard rock unit AFI knows that the band's name stands as an abriviation for A Fire Inside. Few terms could better describe the pulsating, electronic, exotic, often erotic sounds brought forth by this San Francisco-based unit comprised of vocalist Danny Havok, quitarist Jade Puget, bassist Hunter Burgan and drummer Adam Carson. Their music burns with a primal passion, a hotter-than-hot intensity that takes their internal flame and transforms it into some of the most intriguing material to be heard on today's hard rock scene. As proven throughout their latest release,

Decemberunderground, AFI is one band that's impossible to easily define and even more impossible to easily deny.

"So many people have turned their back on us over the years," Havok said. "They've always told us what we can't do, and that's been a perpetual motivation for us. This band has never followed any rules- in fact, we try to deviate from expectations as much as possible when it comes to our music. On this album we've utilized keyboards in a very propulsive manner; it's not really 'dance' music, but when you hear it you can't help but want to get up and move.

There's no question that the intriguing, at times darkly probing content of Decemberunderground clearly helps AFI

stand out from the rest of the contemporary music crowd. Cast amid the endless drek supplied by foul-mouthed rap "gangstas" and soulless pop tarts, the powerful visual images and compelling sound barrage brought forth by AFI represents something shockingly dif-ferent and startlingly original. The fact of the matter is that when a band hits the rock scene with the power and panache of AFI. even the most gristled music biz veterans have to sit back and take notice. It just doesn't seem to happen very frequently these days. And while a plethora of everything-oldis-new-again rock revivalists appear to be stealing a bit of the media spotlight in 2006. there still seems to be plenty of room for a band like AFI to make their mark on the modern music world.

"We're not a bunch of 20-year-olds who only discovered music last year," Havok said with a grin. "We've been around awhile, and our tastes and influences run deep into the rock history books. We have no interest in being a 'flavor of the month' kind of band. We want to challenge people— to make them leave behind their preconceived notions about what music is supposed to be, and what they're supposed to respond to.

Such is the way it is.— and the way it has always been— for the members of AFI, a band that at times throughout their 14 year

come overnight for he and his highly uncon 1992 that the initial version of AFI put out their first music on an independently-released EP. From there, the group continued to change members and hone their sound, releasing albums at regular intervals and slowly building up their following throughout the Northern California area. But it wasn't until the band released their 1997 opus, **Shu**t Your Mouth and Open Your Eyes, that AFI's true musical direction began to become evident. As they bopped from indie label to indie ever-shifting lineup finally began to solidify and by the time that their "break" finally occurred a few years later, Havok and his crew sensed they were walking on firm musical ground. The press coverage generated by their early efforts sparked the band's creative juices, and led them into an intense album-a-year recording schedule (featuring 1998's A Fire recording schedule (featuring 1998's A Fire Inside, 1999's Black Sails in The Sunset and 2000's **The Art of Drowning**) which eventually led them to the "promised land" of major label recognition with **Sing The Sorrow**.

"I take particular pleasure in the response

we received for that album because I know everything that we had to go through to get to it was all an interesting experience, but you do

history has been labeled as everything from punk to metal... and just about everything in between. Indeed, the sounds featured throughout this unit's latest disc, which follows up their 2003 major label debut, **Sing**The Sorrow, may well represent the next step in hard rock's evolutionary process, a process that now seems determined to transform AFI into a bonafide world-wide rock and roll sensation. While this stuff is a far cry from either the dire metal probings that have turned the likes of Staind, Godsmack and Disturbed into platinum-covered superstars, it would certainly seem that AFI have quickly moved to carve out a significant niche for themselves in the

upper ranks of today's hard rock society.
"People have always spent too much effort trying to figure us out," Havok said. "They should use that energy to just listen to the music and enjoy it. We're happy to finally be at a solid place with our career. It's taken us long enough! But good things are always worth waiting for. We've taken our time, paid our dues, and stayed true to our musical beliefs. This music is the result of that."

As Havok indicated, recognition hasn't

want to eventually taste success. With this band, the music has to stand on its own merit, and we're very proud of that.'

The doors that were opened by Sing The Sorrow have now been burst wide open by Decemberundergound, certainly one of the most unusual, stimulating, evocative and provocative discs to emerge this year. From first cut to last (including the break-out single, Miss Murder) this is an album that seems quite content to break any stereotype and shatter any preconceived notion that the listener may have about the contemporary hard rock form. And while Havok insists that his unit isn't out to shake things up merely for the inherent fun of doing so, he does state that surprising as many people as possible has become one of AFI's most pleasurable rock and roll accomplishments.

"We seem to be able to appeal to a very wide audience," he said. "There's stuff in our songs that everyone from metal kids to jocks to skaters can get in to and relate to. It's a big step forward for us, especially with the ambient and electronic elements. We pushed ourselves really hard, and we're happy with the results."

HIT PARADER





Justin Sane and Pat Thetic are punks. And I mean that as a compliment. You might say the co-founders of Pittsburgh's ANTI-FLAG are waving the flag for everything punk rock, as a genre, is supposed to be all about. I came late to the pleasures of For Blood And Empire (RCA) but consider me converted. Besides the fact that they registered over 10,000 new voters during 2004's Warped tour, besides the fact that they ignited thousands on the "Rock Against Bush" tour; the music on the current record stands out as pure propane, as bratty and rebellious as it should be, even if you don't concentrate on the words. It just sounds good.

Rock History 101. The first heavy band I ever listened to was Vanilla Fudge. I stuck my head in between two cheap speakers, cranked the record player up as loud as it would go, and went into the cosmos with You Keep Me Hanging On, a psychedelicized slow dramatic hippie version of a Motown soul song. Several weeks later, the first concert I ever went to was Vanilla Fudge at Upsala College in East Orange, New Jersey. Afterwards, I waited for bassist Tim Bogert to leave

and peppered him with questions. He was such a cool bass player! His runs were spidery, slithery-

fast, and he quick became my first favorite Rock Star.

I remember being upset when Vanilla Fudge broke up. What I didn't know at the time was that drummer Carmine Applice was to take Tim with him and form a band with Jeff Beck, but Beck suffered a car crash and was out of action for awhile. Appice ultimately found singer Rusty Day who had just been kicked out of the Amboy Dukes by Ted Nugent for smoking pot. He also found Jim McCarty—the American Jim McCarty, not to be confused with the British Jim McCarty who drummed for The Yardbirds before forming Renaissance—playing in The Buddy Miles Express after blistering Midwestern stages as lead guitarist in Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels. Thus was born CACTUS. (After Beck recuperated, he hooked up with Rod Stewart and formed The Jeff Beck Group. Stewart wound up splitting from Beck, finding future-Rolling Stone lead guitarist Ron Wood and formed one of the all-time party bands in the universe, The Small Faces.) You with me? Check it out: Cactus put out four albums in 24 months and split up in 1972. Much later, Carmine would wind up drumming for Rod The Mod for over a decade, even writing Do Ya Think I'm Sexy.



forms a band with Canadian quitar hero Pat Travers, puts out a few records, then gets involved in a project called Guitar Zeus that has such stalwarts as Mick Mars of Motley Crue, Slash of Velvet Revolver, Richie Sambora of Bon Jovi, and a plethora of other top guns.

There's a ton of DVD footage just recently released of other great bands who directly or indirect-

V shaped the course of modern metal, DEEP PURPLE, already in the Guinness Book Of World Recolus for being the budget band in flustory, on its classic Smake On The Water recounts the story of trying to record its classic Machine Head allium at the Montreux Casino in Switzerland before it burned down Now, through the magic of video tape, comes their legendary 1996 gig at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Ritchie Blackmore was long gone by then, of course, replaced by a ventable magician of the guitar. Steve Morse (ex-Dregs). The rest of the '96 Purp lineup—singer lan Gillan, bassist Roger Glover, keyboardist Jon Lord and drummer lan Paice—is in rare form on this hour long set, entitled Live At Montreux, highlighted by (what else?) Smoke On The Water, Deep Purple, circa 2006, is still crankin' out the wattage, as its current Rapture Of The Deep studio album can attest to. Now released in a special tour version,

Night, he's rarely seen. But, and this is one big but, again via the current DVD explosion of great Hard Rock and Classic Metal, he can be seen and heard in all his magisterial glory on the all-out gut-bust of Live In Munich, as lead guitarist for the mighty RAINBOW. The year was 1977. Blackmore





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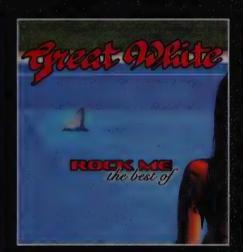
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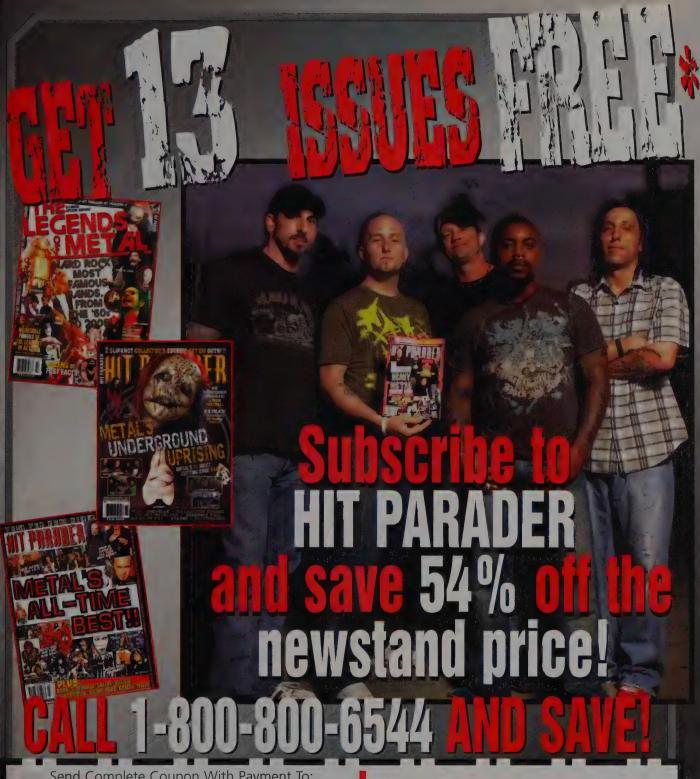
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risting Scappia knows that at this point in her career the way she looks has just as much to do with her band's success as her powerful voice. That fact understandably bothers the strikingly beautiful Italian songstress. But as Lacuna Coll's latest hard rock ing masterwork, Karmacode, continues to slovily wind its way up the American sales charts, Scabbia has come to realize that if her appearance helps open the door for her unit (which also features vocalist Andrea Ferro, guitarist Marco Biazzi, guitarist Cristiano Migliore, bassist Marco Coti Zelati and drummer Cristiano Mozzati) then the expansive, heavy metal sounds presented in their music should be more-than-enough to win over the hearts of rock fans from coast to coast.

"I hope I've learned to use my appearance to its best advantage," she said. "Being a woman who plays heavy music has always been a major help to me because it draws a great deal of attention towards the band, and that is a good thing. I understand that a vast majority of the people who play hard rock music are men, and that's fine with me. But as long as people approach me and the music this band makes with an open mind then I have no problems with any of it. I have always been treated with respect by the fans and by other musicians, and that's really all I can ask for."

On Karmacode, Lacuna Coil have taken the commercial and artistic inroads they made with 2004's Comalies and turned them into a veritable super-highway of hard rocking intent. Filled with stick-to-your-brain stunners like Our Truth and Without A Reason, Karmacode clearly stands as one of the best Continental metal releases of the year. But, of course, when all is said and done, much of Lacuna Coil's current acclaim reverts back to Scabbia's sultry beauty, which has already turned her into a magazine cover star on both side of the Atlantic. While she seems pleased to know that so much extra attention has been generated for Karmacode by her smiling, sexy visage, she's the first to try and direct everyone's attention back to the music made by the LC crew.

This is an album we've made for the fans because they've been so incredibly supportive of us," Scabbia said. "They've waited a long time for us to return, so we wanted to make sure that the wait was worth it. Because of our background, we approach music from a different perspective than American bands. We have embraced much of our Italian heritage and tried to incorporate elements of that into our music. While at heart we are very much a heavy rock band, there is an ethereal element to what we do that is distinctly Italian. We are all very glad that American fans seem to be embracing what we are attempting to accomplish.'

In addition to being one of the few women operating within the heavy metal realm, Scabbia and her bandmates are on the verge on breaking asunder a number of long-standing hard rock traditions. As the leading lights on the notoriously backwards Italian heavy metal scene (quick, name another band that hails from that Mediterranean stronghold), Lacuna Coil now find themselves upholding national pride as well as their own rock and roll aspirations. By featuring two highly distinctive vocalists, Scabbia and Ferro, LC have established themselves as a band willing to take bold artistic chances, and with the success of their latest disc, they've emerged as one of the most promising bands of the metal season.

"We pray for success every day," Scabbia said. "It's not for the fame or money. It's truly more about having the chance to have more people hear our music. The fans back home in Italy have all been so supportive of us. They take as much pride in our accomplishments as we do. There have been very few Italian bands that have been successful in the rock world. Our culture leans more towards classical music and more traditional fare. So our success is something that a whole nation is celebrating. We totally believe in what we're doing. We sense it is something special, and that feeling has thankfully been confirmed by many other people.

As shown by the immediate State-side success of Karmacode, it appears that metal fans are indeed ready to embrace the highly eclectic style presented by Lacuna Coil. Those fans have responded to the melodic metal approach that this unit brings forth by making the band's disc one of the year's hottest-selling hard rock albums. With their penchant for producing

hypnotic, almost dream-like soundscapes, and their ability to then incorporate that idiosyncratic approach within their strident metallic attack, this band has emerged as one of the leader's of Europe's latest hard rock invasion. Indeed, Lacuna Coil's passionate, somber, compelling sound prove that they may soon emerge as one of the most successful Euro-rock units of their generation.

'We have worked very hard to get where we are," Scabbia said. "Some fans in America may just be learning about us now thanks to Karmacode, but others may remember us from

"I hope I've

learned to use

my appearance

advantage.

to its best

Comalies and our role in the 2004 Ozzfest. But our history goes

back a long way, and we've done a number of previous albums, each of which has allowed us to further perfect what we're trying to communicate. This album stands as the culmination of those

As Scabbia mentioned, the history of Lacuna Coil goes back a full decade. It was 1996 when the group first began writing their unique brand of music. By 1998 they had record their self-titled debut disc, an album that made them major stars throughout parts of Europe while helping to slowly open doors in America. Those doors were fur-

ther blown open by the group's subsequent releases. 1999's In A Reverie. 2001's Unleashed Memories, and 2004's Comalies, each of which served to further refine and define the band's unique artistic perspectives. And now with the immediate world-wide success of Karmacode, it seems as if Lacuna Coil is about to emerge as Italy's first true international hard rock phenomenon, and Scabbia can't wait for it to happen.

There is still so much left for us to do," she said, "We feel a strong sense of accomplishment, but it is not a feeling of contentment. We have been given a wonderful opportunity, and we will do whatever we can to make the most of it."





INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BY MICHAEL SHORE COMPILED BY ILKO NECHEV

IBANEZ SLIPKNOT GUITAR

You know Slipknot guitarist Mick Thomson. He's one of THE most familiar faces - well, masked faces - in recent Hit Parader history. And you know Ibanez - one of this column's favorite guitar manufacturers for their long and consistent track record of providing professional quality, hot sound, and

good looks at surprisingly affordable prices. You may know that Mick, one of your faves, has for years been playing one of our faves, Ibanez, and loving it. You may not know that he owns more than 150 guitars, and most of them are Ibanez.

Now the news: Ibanez has come out with a Mick
Thomson Signature Model guitar! It's based on the Ibanez
RG models he's been playing for years, but with some very
special and unique features custom-designed by the masked
metal master himself. Some of those features that set the new
MTM 1 (as in Mick Thomson Model) apart include: a Blood
Red (what else? Okay, maybe black) finish on its so-sharpyou-might-cut-yourself, double-cutaway mahogany body; 5piece maple-walnut Wizard II 25.5-inch scale thru-designed
neck with rosewood fingerboard; an absolutely massive Edge
FX double-locking fixed bridge; and EMG active-electronic pickups (an EMG 60 at the neck and an EMG 81 at the bridge)
which as we've explained in the past allow for more dynamic
tone-shaping than traditional passive-electronic pickups.
There's also (shades of another metal master, Edward Van
Halen) a single volume knob.

The woods Mick picked to used in constructing his guitar are one of the most unique aspects of the MTM 1 - particularly the mahogany used for the body and walnut in the neck. They, and the pack thru design and in that buse

and the neck-thru design ending in that huge bridge, all combine to achieve Thomson's ideal combo of full, fat tone and strong sustain, what Ibanez calls "optimal tonal resonance." Perhaps most unusual of all, the MTM 1 is strung with heavier-gauge strings than a standard RG, and is factory tuned to Mick's preferred C# tuning with a dropped B (so it's B, F#, B, E, G#, C#), helping get that distinctive dark and nasty Slipknot sound. And to prove it, on a recent clinic tour across the U.S., Thomson pulled production models of his Signature guitar right off the wall at store after store - nothing more custom than what you yourself can now get.

As Mick himself puts it: "The combination of mahogany, maple and rosewood with a massive fixed-bridge and EMG pickups make this guitar sound absolutely huge."

The masked master has spoken - and now.



so can you, through his very own distinctive guitar. It'll run you \$1733.32 list, one of the pricier items Ibanez makes...but sound, looks and power as singular and downright scary as Mick himself couldn't really be expected to come for much less...could it?

For more info on the Ibanez Mick Thomson Signature MTM 1 guitar, visit www.ibanez.com online.



GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR

SHURE KSM9 HANDHELD WIRELESS

Shure's new KSM9 is a reference-quality handheld wireless microphone, designed especially for vocals. Built to bring studio sound quality to the live stage, the KSM9 has not one but two industry firsts: dual-diaphragm construction, and the versatility of switchable cardioid/supercardioid sound. Naturally for a mic made for the stage. it's got excellent gain-before-feedback quality, which combines with minimal proximity effect to give it superb lowfrequency response and crystal-clear overall performance. And to significantly reduce handling noise, it's got a two-stage shock mounting that stabilizes both horizontal and vertical movement. The KSM9 is sold as part of Shure's UHF-R wireless system, with black or champagne transmitter and replacement cartridge finishes. For more info, check out www.shure.com online.



Peavey's new Windsor guitar amp brings back the classic British sounds that revolutionized rock in the 1960s and 70s. The single-channel all-tube 120-watt design updates those golden tones with the latest technology and reliability, matching four EL34 power tubes and three 12AX7 preamp tubs with exclusive tone-shaping features. Most amps

leave the EQ to the preamp section - and the Windsor has that too but it also gives you extra Presence and Resonance controls that shape the upper and lower ends of the tone by adjusting the speaker damping from tight to loose. The Windsor also has Peavey's patent-pending Texture cir-

cuitry, to customize circuitry response from vintage Class A sounds to modern A/B push-pull - and, for maximum color range, it's incremental! There's also foot-switchable gain boost and effects loop, that 3-band rotary preamp EQ, master volume, and high and low inputs. Completing the package is the accompanying Windsor 412 speaker enclosure with four Supreme XL 12-inch speakers

PLANET WAVES TUNER

Planet Waves has introduced several innovative new tuners, one of which, the Pro-Winder Tuner, we covered in March. The others include: the S.O.S. (Strobe-on-String) Tuner (\$19.99) uses strobing LED lights projected onto the strings when the strobes stop "moving" on the string, it's in tune, with no input or even sound necessary! The Pocket Tuner is a convenient, lightweight, pocket-sized tuner with Planet Waves' sweep-strobe rotary display; it's also an input/output-equipped in-line tuner (\$54.99). The Full-Function Tuner and Metronome is an all-in-one practice workstation for serious players, with deluxe sweep-strobe rotary tuner and a professional metronome that does beat-subdivision and odd time-signatures (\$119.99). And the Pedal Tuner has all the pro features you need in a rugged die-cast-body pedal with hard black chrome finish; the tuner includes a true hard bypass that preserves your tone when it's not in use (\$119.99). For more info, check out

www.planetwaves.com online.





PAISTE

Paiste's new Light Dark Ride Mark 1 may have a funny-sounding name - "Light Dark"? what, does it have a "fat skinny sound"? But the name is the only thing funny about it - its actual sound is serious, and seriously rich, powerful, beautiful and versatile. The "Light Dark" designation actual refers to its weight, which is light - as in thin - as well as its tonal character, which is dark as in low-pitched. It's part of Paiste's New Signature series, launched with the Dark Energy cymbals, which you could call Paiste's answer to the vintage, dark sounds of Zildjian's K.

Zildjian cymbals. But there's a lot more than that to the New Signatures (and the Dark Energies) - they are very much their own creations. The Light Dark Ride is a 21-inch beauty with an eye-catchingly textured hand-hammered finish: its thinness and construction give it a shimmery, breathy, sparkly, very rich and buttery ride sound and crash sound that's surprisingly huge for a ride. It's very responsive and con-

trollable and overall, probably too subtle for a lot of heavy rock playing but it is a Paiste so it'll cut through, especially as a roaring crash-ride, and even if some of its subtleties were lost in the amplification it still

sounds so fab and distinctive, it's well worth checking out.
So is another new 21-inch New Signature ride, the Dark Dry Ride Mark
1 - which is a bit heavier, so a bit cleaner sounding, with an earthy spanky "pang" over a dark wash; it's more of a straight ride than one you can crash so it's more suited to fast pattern playing. Hey, if you can afford it, get 'em both! Being part of a series Paiste calls "the highest state of the art" in sound and quality, though, it'll cost you. For more info on these and Paiste's many, many other cymbals - which range from budget and intermediate lines to top-shelf pro gear like these and the 2002s - visit www.paiste.com online, where you can even hear soundfiles of the cymbals.

And finally, any and all drummers are human, and are in competition with inhuman machines that never rush or slow a beat unless their batteries run down. But in the timekeeping wars between man and machine, one machine helps the humans: a metronome. And Korg has one heck of a new one in its BeatLab BTL-1, a metronome-plus with training functions for 39 standard patterns from rolls and paradiddles to flams and other rudiments; sound and LED cue indicators to perfect your timing of right and left-hand strokes; selectable rhythms from quarter notes through sixteenth notes, plus triplets, at up to 9 strokes per beat; a program mode to

build user-defined practice patterns as simple or complex as you need; 24 programmable presets for tempo, beat and the sound volume of each rhythm; chain mode to memorize eight chains of up to 16 programmed patterns each; built-in speaker, and more! Yes, a metronome-plus - plus a LOT. And all for \$150. For more info visit www.korg.com online.



PRO-MARK

To hit those cymbals, consider Pro-Mark's two new Autograph models from Jason Bittner, of Shadows Fall, and Jimmy DeGrasso, the accomplished rock drummer who's played with Suicidal Tendences, Megadeth and others. The Bittner stick is the lighter and brighter of the two, 16 1/8"long and .590 inches in diameter with an acorn-shaped nylon tip. retailing for \$13.50 per pair. The longer, heavier, darker-sounding DeGrasso is 16.5 inches long and .617 inches diameter, with a modified acorn-shaped wood tip, listing for \$12.95. Both are made of American hickory wood. For more info, go to www.promark.com online.

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